

THE
**SOCIALIST
STANDARD**

1965

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Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



January 1965 6d

Socialist Party OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Visitors are cordially invited to every meeting

SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head," Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY Thursdays 8 pm 7th and 21st Jan. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

BRADFORD & DISTRICT Correspondence: SPGB, Head Office, 52 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, S.W.2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm: 1st Jan. at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath (Tel. BEX 1950) and 15th Jan. at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham, SE9 (Tel: KIP 1796). Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: A. Donnelly, 50 Doncaster Street, Glasgow, NW.

HACKNEY 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month 7.30 pm, Bethnal Green Town Hall (Room 3, Patriot Square entrance). Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Rd., N.W.3.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Rd., Enquiries: B. Nelson, above address.

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 2. Tel: 24680.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

MID HERTS Regular meetings at Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage. For details see meetings page 202, and write: Ken Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. (Phone Hatfield 4802).

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

ARMAGH Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 20 Druids Villas, Armagh City, Co. Armagh.

SOCIALIST STANDARD JANUARY 1965

NOTTINGHAM 2nd Wednesday in month (13th Jan.) 8 pm, Peoples Hall, Heathcoat Street Correspondence: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesdays 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.) Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Mondays 4th & 18th Jan. Room 3 Community Centre, (Off the Gore) Basildon, 8 pm. Correspondence: A. Partner, 28 Hambro Hill, Raleigh.

SWANSEA 1st and 3rd Monday (4th and 18th Jan.) in month 8 pm, 68 Bryn Road (bottom flat) Correspondence to P. Mellor, 13 Waterloo Place, Brynmill, Swansea.

WEMBLEY Mondays 8 pm, Barham Old Court, Barham Park, near Sudbury Town Station, Wembley. Correspondence: R. G. Cain, 35 Waltham Rd., Southall, Middx.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (7th and 21st Jan.) in month 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools Manor Park, E12. (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N.22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (8th and 22nd Jan.) in month 7.30 pm, Town Social Club Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Enquiries: M. Hopwood St. Martins Rd., Ashton on Mersey, Sale. Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MAI 5165.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302

REDHILL Enquiries: A. A. Kemp, 19 Ashcombe Road, Mersham, Redhill, Surrey.

SUNDERLAND Details of meetings from P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate Sunderland, Co. Durham.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

LISBURN Discussion group meets regularly. Details from B. McCloskey c/o Head Office.

PORTADOWN & DISTRICT Would persons interested in the formation of a discussion group contact group secretary c/o 5 Granville Buildings 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4, at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 pm. Next meeting January 25th.

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A message for the New Year

Another new year has arrived, and with it the usual crop of wishes for health, wealth, and prosperity. It is customary for the politicians and press at this arbitrary point in time to review the last twelve months and talk about our prospects in the coming year.

Probably many of them, Tories in particular, will be glad to turn their backs on 1964, not without a shudder. For the Conservative Party, it was a time of internal ructions and fortunes at a low ebb. Under the rather uninspiring leadership of Douglas-Home, they were still trying to live down the effects of the Profumo and other scandals, and were sensing the swing of opinion against them as the general election drew near. For the Labour Party, it was of course a different story.

With the turn of the year, Wilson's hundred days will be more than three-quarters gone, and with them perhaps some of the working class enthusiasm which gave him his precarious victory last October. A settling-in period he called it, and in that time the Labour Government have been busy imposing just the sort of measures which they so heartily condemned when their predecessors used them. There is nothing surprising in this. Such is the stuff of capitalist politics that even the best-intentioned promises are broken just like so much piecrust.

If the sentiments of a new year's wish could become a reality by wishing hard enough, life would be a lot simpler, but whatever we may wish, capitalism will determine what we get, and for most of us it will be a pretty second rate existence. For we are the majority and we have no ownership in the means of production and distribution; we have to rely on our wage packets to get by. Because of this, 1965 basically will not be any different for us than the years which went before, although Labour politicians will try to tell us otherwise.

For the owning minority it is another story. Capitalism will determine what they get also, but it will be very much more worth having than the very best for which workers can hope. It will in fact be for them a life of ease and comfort, with the best food, clothing and shelter that money can buy. Despite the ups and downs of business, this will be the general picture of their life from one end of the year to the other. They are the capitalist class.

Capitalism is based upon the minority ownership of the means of life, where the paramount interest is the production of goods for sale and profit. Such a system is anarchic, riddled with anomalies and contradictions, and relegates human interests to a point way down the list of priorities. Yet despite all this, it will not die of old age, but will stay in existence until the workers of the world decide to end it. It is against this background that the failures of governments fall into perspective. They just cannot deliver the goods as far as workers are concerned, because capitalism can only be administered in the interests of the capitalist class.

The only answer is to establish a world of common ownership, where production is carried on solely for the use and enjoyment of the whole of the world's population. It will take mass working class knowledge and understanding to achieve, but that it can and will be done is our confident expectation, despite the apparent bleakness of the present outlook.

THE NEWS IN REVIEW

POLITICS

Pay rise

History repeats itself.

One of the first acts of the 1945 Labour government, while admonishing us all to tighten our belts, was to agree to increase the pay of Members of Parliament.

One of the first acts of the 1964 Labour government was . . .

Perhaps it is true that some M.P.s have a hard time trying to do their job on the old pay; rising prices have hit them just as they have hit everyone else. But every M.P. belongs to a party which has promised to halt rising prices, and most of them belong to the two parties which have failed miserably to fulfill that promise. Have the M.P.s, then, only themselves to blame for their plight?

Apart from that, many members do not have a hard time. Several Tory ex-Ministers have recently taken lucrative jobs on the boards of big companies, and on the same day as the increases in pay were announced a Labour member was involved in a traffic case which happened while he was driving his *Rolls Royce*.

The M.P.'s case is in fact no stronger than that of the dockers and a great deal less pressing than that of nurses, busmen and railwaymen.

But these people, just like the rest of the working class, are not in the fortunate situation of being able to argue their case with themselves, and of being able to vote themselves a rise in pay.

They have to struggle for their rises—with their employers, through arbitration, sometimes before a Court of Inquiry into the conditions of their industry. The arguments used against them rarely question their claim as such; they usually attack it on the grounds of increased production costs, and its effects upon the employers' profit margins.

If in the end a rise is granted it often comes grudgingly, with associated promises from the workers to relax demarcation rules, or to step up productivity, or to forego any further claims for some years.

All of this is looked upon with approval by the Members of Parliament, all of whom support wage restraint in one shape or another. But apparently all the arguments they have used, about what they called the national interest and other claptrap, do not apply when they sit in judgement on themselves.

There is one argument the M.P.s could

not have used to support their claim and that is that there is a shortage of men for the job. Although the M.P. is supposed to be badly paid, there are always at least two men for every vacancy. If that condition held good in industry at large, employers would no longer be bothered by the problem of wage claims.

Perhaps the only consistent case the M.P.s could make out was that they have always done a good job, have always served their masters faithfully, have always trooped into the right lobby at the right time and generally have always done everything they could to keep capitalism comfortable for the people who own it and live off it and who pay out the rises.

AT HOME

Payment deferred

One of the more humiliating aspects of an old age pensioner's life is the cloud of hypocrisy which covers every discussion of their plight.

In the last election, all the capitalist parties bid for votes on a promise of an increase in pensions in the near future. It was only when the M.P.s had been returned, pledged to do something about the pensioners' difficulties, that we saw what the promises were worth.

From the fuss which was kicked up about the rise, it almost seemed as if pensions were to go up by several pounds a week. In fact, the increase will be twelve shillings and sixpence.

Even more, this meagre increase will not be payable until next April which means that the pensioners have to face—and some of them perhaps not survive—the winter on the present scale of payment.

Nobody will begrudge the pensioners anything they can get. But it is sickening that the Labour Party should talk about abolishing poverty when all they are doing is handing out so mean an increase, which cannot hope to stave off even the extremes of an old person's destitution.

And it is equally sickening that Labour M.P.s should be in revolt over the delay in paying the bigger pensions. The government's reasons for the delay are consistent enough; they are, after all in power to run capitalism without any old nonsense about humane considerations.

In this, the Labour M.P.s support their government. They support it in its power at Westminster, and they support it in its administration of capitalism.

For the pensioners, this is just too bad. The roots of their troubles do not lie in the size of their pension. That has gone up several times over the pre-war figure, without having any effect on the pensioners' situation.

Old people are in desperate straits because they are retired members of the working class. Once they depended on their wage for a living but now they are too old to be of any use to an employer.

But to leave them without any sort of an income would create an enormous social problem. So the old people receive a derisory sum—just enough to keep them in some sort of living condition. They may not have a very comfortable home, and they may not be able to afford adequate food or heating. But they survive—just.

In human terms, this is deplorable, but it is an inevitable result of capitalism's social structure. And where do the Labour Party stand on that?

They may want to alter one or two of the system's superficial features. They may feel strongly enough about some of them to stage a short and feeble revolt against their leaders.

But on the only issue that matters—the abolition of capitalism—they are one united, determined party. Capitalism, with its restrictions and anomalies, will continue. No back benchers will ever revolt over that.

ABROAD

Same again

One of the persistent fallacies which help to keep capitalism ticking over is the notion that things are better, or anyway different, abroad.

The British worker, chafing under his own burdens, looks enviously upon what he imagines to be the gaiety, or the freedom, or the affluence of his counterpart in other countries. Workers abroad harbour the same sort of misconceptions about life over here.

Sometimes they put their theories to the test, by emigrating. Then they discover that basically workers lives are the same in every country in the world.

In France, which is so often misconceived as a country of gay and ardent wineswiggers, the workers' lives are subject to the same sort of restrictions as in this country. The French government recently announced their new economic and social plan which will try, among other things, to hold wages increases to

three per cent for the next five years.

In Holland, popularly thought of as a land of simple, sunny peasants, the government, like other governments elsewhere, are wrestling with a housing problem. Their latest palliative is a familiar one—a system of subsidies. The Dutch Minister of Housing recently said that he hopes to end the housing shortage by 1970, which is about the year that British Housing Ministers will mention when they are promising to solve our housing difficulties.

In Australia, where everyone is sup-

posed to be a tough, bronzed individualist, the government is imposing their first-ever peace time military conscription. Against the opposition to this, the Australian government pleads that the situation in South East Asia demands that tough-guy Australians forego some of their individualism.

All over the world the disputes and the problems of capitalism take their toll. All over the world useful, creative human beings are exploited and degraded into varying degrees and types of poverty and suppression. Capitalism is international

and so are its evils.

International, too, is capitalism's hypocrisy. This month sees the opening of International Cooperation Year, sponsored by Prince Phillip, Mr. Wilson, Sir Alec Douglas Home, Mr. Grimond, and supported by £10,000 from the Foreign Office.

The Year will dabble its foolish fingers in all manner of futile projects. The one thing it will not sponsor will be the international cooperation of the working class to abolish the social system which causes all their problems.

ANGUS McPHAIL

It is with regret that we have to record that our comrade Angus McPhail died on December 3rd after a short illness.

T. Mulhern, a close friend and comrade for many years writes:

"He was a supporter and member of the Socialist Party for more than forty years. From the era of Moses Baritz and Adolph Kohn, many Socialists from Scotland, England, Ireland, Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand, Australia and Europe were grateful for the hospitality and generosity of Beech McPhail and his wife, Jessie.

Apart from his life-long adherence to our movement, his two largest contributions were: (1) From the outbreak of the war in September 1939, until its end, and indeed afterwards, he was a courageous and eloquent advocate of a large number of young members at C.O. Tribunals. (2) In the early years he organised a speakers class in Glasgow, which produced a relatively large number of Party speakers.

"Beech" McPhail was always uncompromising, sometimes harsh, yet despite financial circumstances which would have permitted weaker types to forget the interests of the working class, maintained the interests of the latter. To use an old cliché, McPhail, like Cromwell (an unfair criticism to McPhail), can be painted with his warts. To those of us who have known him—he will never be forgotten.

He was cremated privately from the David Elder Cottage Hospital in Glasgow, according to his family's wishes, and his ashes deposited on Loch Awe where he, and many other comrades spent many happy hours fishing, talking and drinking, and serene moments of a feeling of entire removal from the sordid realities of world capitalism.

To his wife Jessie, and his family, we extend our deepest regrets and sympathy at his passing."

ROBERT BARRON

We deeply regret to announce the death of Comrade Robert Barron on 21st November. He was a member of the Glasgow Branch for over thirty years. Bob Barron was a loyal and active member who devoted a whole lot of his time in spreading the Socialist case wherever he went. Although not a speaker, he was the type of member who forms the backbone of any organisation. The hard work behind the scenes, and out of the limelight, is always very important and essential. Comrade Barron was a constant attendee at Branch and propaganda meetings and a keen distributor of our literature amongst his friends and workmates. Declining health over the past three years prevented his continuing, but it did not reduce his interest and enthusiasm for the cause. We extend our deepest sympathy and regret to his family and relatives.

J.H.

Companion Parties

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Sydney (callers) 46 Carlotta St, Greenwich, N.S.W. or correspondence: P.O. Box 2291 P.O. Sydney N.S.W.
Melbourne P.O. Box 1440 Melbourne

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

P.O. Box 115 Winnipeg, Manitoba

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

P.O. Box 62 Petone.
P.O. Box 1929 Auckland.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

11 Faneuil Hall Sq., Boston 9, Mass.

STRIKE TO STOP WAR

It has for long been the habit of Labourites and others in this country, and those occupying a similar position abroad, to boast that they held in their hands the instrument which would make it impossible for the ruling class of Europe to carry on a great war. This instrument was the General Strike. We all know how persistently it was stated that the organised workers of the various countries would, immediately on the outbreak of war, paralyse the war-mongers by "downing tools"! Yet where is there to be found a single instance in the whole vast war-stricken expanse, of this "heroic" policy coming to fruition?

If any attempt was made in Germany to put the policy of the general strike into operation, that attempt, in its utter failure to even so much as become an item of news, is as destructive to the theory as would be the failure to make the effort. But with regard to the advocates of the general strike as an anti-war measure in this country we are not in the dark. Mr. Keir Hardie, for example, one of the more prominent of those at home who have toyed with the idea, has written to the Press denying that he has told the workers not to enlist, adding "I know too well what is at stake." It is not out of this frame of mind that anti-war strikes are developed.

In this direction, as in many others, events here proved the truth of what we have consistently contended, namely, that the political conquest is the essential preliminary to any action involving the defeat of the present controllers of the political machinery. No wild words or frenzied ravings about "taking and holding" on the one hand, or "general striking" on the other can replace political control.

From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, January, 1915.

Automation in perspective

EVER since automation, some ten years ago, became a popular topic for newspaper writers in this country an enormous amount has been printed and spoken about its nature and likely consequences—most of it totally uninformed and misleading. Nine out of ten of the busy journalists have no time to find out for themselves all they can do is to ask the so-called experts, and write up the appropriate sensational stories that their editors suppose the readers want. Few of the “experts” are any better placed when it comes to understanding what effects automation can have on the social system.

They may know a lot about the technical side of the computers and other equipment they manufacture or operate but little or nothing about the economic laws of the world in which they are going to be used—the world of capitalism.

It is only necessary to look at the wildly different forecasts that are made to know that something must be seriously lacking in the sources of information. On one side are the prophets of abundance, prosperity and leisure on the automation road; on the other those who tell us that soon most of the working class will be out of work, displaced by automated, worker-less factories.

A couple of samples. A writer in *Sunday Citizen* (6 Dec. 1964), Mr. Stanley Baron, after he had talked “to the top brains in Britain; made the forecast that before the end of the century, “in every industrial country, certainly in the West, most of the essential work will be performed by about 20 per cent of the people—chiefly the most intelligent. The rest of us will work only as much as we wish—or as much as society requires.” This would, he wrote, call for new attitudes to work and leisure, new cities, new forms of education—but not a word about the need for a new social system in place of capitalism.

On the same day Mr. Arthur Helliwell, writing in the *People* after a visit to America, quoted trade union officials who foretell that by 1970—no need to wait until the end of the century—American unemployment will be up to 15 million, with “the American economy grinding to a complete standstill.” It is not difficult to show that there is something wrong with Mr. Helliwell's facts, his reasoning, or his arithmetic. He tells of experts who “estimate that robots are gobbling up jobs at the rate of 40,000 to 70,000 a week,” and that between 2 and 2½ million men “are being thrown out of work every year.” Mr. Helliwell believes that automation, which has been going ahead fast in America for many years, destroys jobs wholesale and swells unemployment wholesale, and he quoted current unemployment there is “already 5,000,000.” If he had inquired a little further he would have discovered that American unemployment is not a couple of million more than it was a year ago, but actually rather less, and that the peak of unemployment occurred about thirty years ago when it was variously estimated at between eleven and fourteen millions, long before automation had been heard of. Also that the number of workers actually in employment in manufacturing industries is higher than it was a year ago; that is in precisely the field in which automation has had relatively big impact.

In Britain, where automation has so far been adopted much less than in America, the picture as regards unemployment is much the same, unemployment is lower than it was a year or two years ago, and the number of people actually in employment is at a record level. So, with much automation in U.S.A. and little automation in Britain, the trends of employment and unemployment have been much the same.

What then is the kind of impact automation makes in the field of employment? The answer is that it is the same kind as that resulting from all the mechanical and other labour-

displacing developments of the past two hundred years. So while there might be something in favour of the arguments of those who want the name automation to be kept separate from other technical developments, there is no need to differentiate when we are considering the effect on the workers' jobs.

The fundamental cause for the introduction of machinery in the 19th century or for the introduction of automation now is that the firm which is spending money on it hopes to make more profit with it than without it, either because it reduces the cost of production, or, as sometimes happens, because it enables the manufacturer to get his products on the market ahead of his rivals even though the cost is not reduced.

These developments have almost always had the consequence of destroying traditional jobs and putting the workers out of work, often with tragic consequences for the victims, who see their acquired skills rendered useless, and who are forced to take lower-paid jobs or find they can't get work at all.

But here is it necessary to distinguish between the disappearance of certain kinds of work and the reduction in the total number of jobs available. Mechanisation, automation, and the displacement of whole industries all have the former consequences, but do they have the latter? Those who shudder about the monster automation are sure that it does. They are sure that automation will progressively and speedily reduce the total amount of employment for the working class. One group in U.S.A., “The Labor Committee for Full Employment,” at a Conference in December 1963, heard an address from Dr. Arthur Carsters in which he declared that it will be possible within the next decade, “to produce all the goods we need in the U.S.A. with two per cent of the working population.”

The object of the Conference was “to create more jobs”: if they fail, the result, according to their way of looking at things, will be that by about 1974, 98 of every 100 workers in USA will be unemployed.

Of course it isn't true. It is based on a common misunderstanding of the relationship of technical change to increased productivity, a misunderstanding which leads those concerned into an absurd exaggeration of productivity and the extent to which it is increased by mechanical and other developments.

The corrective for this misunderstanding is to recognise, as Marx pointed out, that the amount of labour required to produce a given article is not merely the labour of the worker engaged in the concluding manufacturing or assembly processes but also the labour embodied in the materials and in the necessary transport, the fuel and the wear and tear of machinery etc. If we make the error of looking at only one part of the process, for example the work of the telephone operator, we get a wholly distorted picture. The introduction of an automatic system which reduces or eliminates telephone operators, will seem to mark a very great increase of productivity and reduction in employment; but in relation to the whole labour process in the telephone service, including the increased labour cost for the equipment itself, it will represent a very moderate reduction.

It is astonishing that Sir Leon Bagrit, Chairman of Elliott-Automation and the leading spokesman on automation problems, suffers from this kind of blindness to what ought to be an elementary aspect of his subject matter. In the first of his Reith Lectures on *The Age of Automation* he led up to his theme about the increase of productivity we can expect in future through automation by telling his audience that “in the United States . . . one man on the land produces more than enough food to feed fifteen men in the cities, and in fact there

is a surplus of food grown even by this small proportion of American labour force.”

The statement is in fact wildly inaccurate and misleading. Food, whether in U.S.A. or Britain, is not “produced” by men on the land: it is produced through a series of operations involving also the labour of the transport workers, the makers of farm implements and fertilisers, the producers of petrol etc. etc. (Sir Leon is equally in error when he supposes that the existence of a “surplus” in relation to the market is evidence of there being an actual surplus in relation to needs.)

If the rest of Sir Leon Bagrit's estimates and forecasts have no sounder foundation than his opinions on agricultural productivity they don't invite much confidence.

Growth of productivity has been and is still quite slow. In Britain, measured by the estimates of total annual production, it was rising at about one per cent a year before 1914, one and a half per cent between the wars and about two per cent since. The plan to raise it to 4 per cent has so far not succeeded and the figure for the current year is expected to be two per cent again.

It remains to link up unemployment and employment with the effects of increased productivity due to mechanisation and automation. If total production of all kinds remained unchanged year by year, then in ten years 20 per cent of the workers would be unemployed and unemployment would increase year by year beyond that level.

But total output under capitalism does not remain unchanged year after year. Over the long term the general experience of all countries is for total production to go on rising, not merely in line with population but beyond it, but equally it is normal for the growth to be interrupted from time

to time by periods of “depression” when production falls or stagnates and when unemployment rises. This would happen even without changes in technical methods of production, new machines, automation and so on, though they can aggravate what would happen anyway. It would therefore be possible for capitalism to produce another depression like that before the war, not because of automation but because production under capitalism is to make profit by selling what is produced in the world's markets. The remedy is to abolish capitalism, but people like Sir Leon Bagrit have hardly begun to understand what capitalism is (though presumably he and his firm have a clear idea of the necessity to persuade British and other firms to buy their products). One of his foolish notions is that the world is divided into “capitalist” and “communist or socialist” countries and that automation may make it possible to put human values first and thus supersede both systems.

Let us enlighten him by reminding him that on both sides of the supposed dividing line between Russian State capitalism and Western capitalism, machinery and automated equipment is bought for precisely the same means—to reduce costs of production and capture markets. Not two worlds but one, capitalist world.

Let us also emphasise that automation will not solve the basic problem of the working class. The automated equipment of the future will, like that of the present, become instruments for the exploitation of the working class in the interest of the owning class. Automation will neither destroy capitalism nor change its nature into something beneficial to humanity.

H

Workers' Control

THE phrase “workers' control” is today frequently used as if it were some sort of definition of socialism. In fact it is nothing of the kind, implying as it does the continued existence of a working class and control of the productive system by units less than society.

The origin of the idea can be found in the 19th century divisions between socialists and anarchists. These saw society from two completely opposed points of view. Socialists saw society and the individual as reciprocal terms; the one couldn't exist without the other. The anarchists, on the other hand, as a caricature of bourgeois individualism, saw the individual as the important unit, as an isolated being. For them society was a restriction on the freedom of the individual. While socialists recognised the need for an organisation to arrange the affairs of society as a whole, the anarchists were for a free federation of local communities and as much decentralisation as possible.

Socialists did distinguish between society and the state. In their view the State, as a coercive instrument, only flourished in class societies and was the instrument whereby a ruling class controlled society. In the classless society of the future there would be no coercive government machine, central control would be purely administrative. Unfortunately many

people, including some who called themselves socialists, overlooked this distinction between society and the state.

In Germany, for example, this was the period of the “cult of the state.” The state was Truth, Freedom and so on; its mission was to free mankind; to do this it must be made democratic. The anarchists, understandably, rejected this view though their view of the state was equally inadequate: for them it was the enemy and root of all evil, Kropotkin correctly-labelled the views of the German Social Democrats of this period as state capitalism.

In opposition, Kropotkin put forward the idea that the basic unit of the future society should be the free commune; where necessary, as for running things like the railways, these communes should be linked in a loose federation. This is the doctrine of Anarcho-Communism; it should be contrasted with the socialist view, that the basic unit of future society can only be society itself.

The real origin of the idea of workers' control comes from another anarchist trend, anarcho-syndicalism. The commune, of course, is a geographical unit. For the anarcho-syndicalists the basic unit was not to be geographical, but industrial, with industrial unions as the basis of the new society. The workers in a particular industry would own and control that industry.

through their union. Once again, the various unions were to be linked together in a federation. More elaborate plans envisaged an Industrial Republic, a world Federation of Labour. The syndicalists, who were particularly strong in France (whence their name, from the French word for trade union, *syndicat*), advocated that the workers should directly own and control the means of production. This was opposed to the socialist view, that under socialism the free producers would own and control the means of production as a whole through society. The slogans Workers' Control, The Mines for the Miners, The Factories to the Workers, are all syndicalist in origin.

At the turn of the century the idea was taken up by the American Daniel DeLeon. He put forward the idea of what he called Socialist Industrial Unionism. Under this scheme the means of production were to be collectively owned, but administered by the workers through Industrial Unions. De Leon, the leader of the Socialist Labor Party, was also one of the founders of the I.W.W., the Industrial Workers of the World.

De Leon's conception of the future society was criticised because it didn't recognise that society would be the unit, and because it allowed for conflicts of interest between the producers in different industries. Under Socialism, there could be no permanent conflict groups; society as a whole would exercise democratic control over the means of production.

The Russian Revolution was a further source of theories of workers' control. It often happens that when the capitalist class temporarily lose control through the breakdown of the government machine and general anarchy is threatened, the workers do the obvious: they take over the factories and try to run them themselves. This happened in Russia in 1917-18, in Italy in 1921, in Spain in 1936 and in Hungary in 1956. In Italy and in Spain the experiments rapidly came to an end as soon as the capitalists had regained control. In Hungary the Red Army performed this task. In Russia the Bolsheviks were faced with a *fait accompli*: the workers had themselves seized the factories. All the Bolsheviks could do was to pass decrees recognising this.

These experiments in workers' control failed, not least because of the inexperience of the workers, which was not surprising considering the backwardness of Russia at that time. In order to keep production going the Bolsheviks had to institute one-man management. The idea of workers' control and

workers' councils still lived on in the minds of dissident Bolsheviks, and some of these developed a coherent theory. These theories received more support in the general reaction against Stalinism after the second world war, when the bureaucratic State Capitalism of Russia was said to have its origins in the decision to end workers' control in 1918. This was hardly an adequate explanation, of the excesses of Stalin's rule, but it did provide some sort of an answer for disillusioned ex-Stalinists.

Ideas of workers' control became more popular in periods of disorder of the sort described above. The experiences of these periods have provided the basis for many theories of workers' control and of spontaneous revolution without understanding or organisation. They have become part of a general mythology fostered by loose-thinking and an inadequate understanding of the nature of present-day society. These episodes in Russia, Italy and elsewhere have very little relevance for socialism; they were not socialist in character and could not have led to socialism, even if they hadn't been suppressed.

A little thought shows them to be exceptional and isolated incidents occurring when the control of the capitalist class had been weakened. But workers imbued with capitalist prejudices before the collapse can be expected to keep them during and after it. Without socialist understanding there was bound to be a rapid return to normal capitalism as soon as order was restored. Unfortunately, clear thinking is uncommon on this whole question of workers' control. It seems to be a slogan full of meaning. A closer examination discloses its inadequacy.

Basically it reflects the anarchist hostility to society and social control as such: it also reflects their naive insistence that everything should be done through voluntary associations rather than permanent machinery. Basically the demand for workers' control is a demand that the workers on the shopfloor should control production through a workshop organisation rather than through society. Quite apart from the fact that there won't be any "workers" under Socialism, this demand is unrealistic and Utopian. The productive system of today is incredibly complicated in its world-wide organisation. It could only be controlled by society as a whole through a fairly complex and permanent administrative apparatus. To suggest otherwise is to ignore the nature of the modern world with its large-scale industry.

A.L.B.

OUR PARLIAMENTARY FUND

The response to the appeal for funds was excellent, the final total received amounting to £800. In the event, the actual expenses were less than were estimated, partly due to the fact that the members working in the two constituencies of Woodside (Glasgow) and Bromley (Kent) did some of the work which we normally expect to pay for e.g. producing and sticking up posters. Consequently, the total expenditure came to £600, including the forfeiture of two deposits of £150 each. Thus, we have a useful balance of £200 as a

starter for our next participation. A report on the campaign will appear in the "Socialist Standard" shortly, but, in the meantime, the Executive Committee warmly thanks all those supporters and members who, by their contributions, ensured that we were free from money worries during the campaign, a factor especially heartening to those who were doing the pleasurable but hard work in the field.

PHYLLIS HOWARD, Party Funds Organiser.

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 pm
East Street, Walworth
3rd January (1 pm)
10th & 24th January (noon)
17th & 31st January (11 am)

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm

Churchill's birthday

HERE, it was obvious, was what they call a great man. Propped up, glassy eyed, at the window, flapping his hand at the crowd outside. Oozing in his senility, like the old Disraeli with his corsets and lacquered hair. Famous visitors came and went. An enormous cake was carried in, with sacks full of cards and telegrams. The flashlights popped and the television cameras whirled. Winston Churchill was ninety years old.

Most people were agreed that this was a remarkable achievement. Perhaps it was, in a way. An impressive feature of the many newspaper reminiscences of the old man in his hey day was the amount of hard liquor which he has put down. One article said that when he was Prime Minister, he drank champagne and brandy with every meal and sipped at tumblers of whisky and soda all through the day. A man of lesser constitution would almost certainly have been killed by such a deluge of alcohol.

Churchill's consumption of drink is typical of the gusto with which he has lived his life, and it is this gusto which has been the subject of much recent hypocrisy. First, the business of those ninety years. It is too obvious that to be born into a family like the Churchills gives a person a built in advantage in their prospects of longevity because, everything else being equal, they are going to get the best of everything. The best food. A secure and comfortable home. The best education and, if they want it, an interesting job.

It is a different matter for the people who were cheering so enthusiastically outside Churchill's window on his birthday and it is worthwhile to take a look at how they live. Their lives may be summed up in one word poverty, although it is a different kind from the poverty their parents knew, in the days when Churchill was a young man. They are, first of all, the people who make the wealth of the world. They design the factories where it is made, they plan its production and they work on the benches and assembly lines where the wealth comes rolling off. They transport the wealth all over the world. Some of them sit in offices, adding up how much profit their employers have made and how much they can hope to make in the future. Without these people, capitalist society would collapse.

But that is not likely to happen. Because not only do those people make the world's wealth but they do their best to make sure that their employers get the profit which comes from production. Almost all of them are fervent protectors of property rights and readily join up, and if necessary die, to protect the property of one set of employers against the intrusions of another. Patiently, willingly, they trudge through their meagre lives bearing the burden of a parasite class which lives off their labours. They keep this class in luxury, so that one of its members can be a burbling old man at a window—yet rich beyond any dreams of the people outside.

These producing, organising, protecting, patient people are the working class and it is sadly typical of them that they should be so enthusiastic about the birthday of a man who has never entirely hidden his contempt for them.

It is no exaggeration to say that working class life is itself a health hazard. Inferior, constricted housing and sub-standard food is a health hazard. So are typical working conditions—the remorseless assembly line, the endless flow of paper across a harassed desk. So is the essential insecurity of employment—the fact that a worker's livelihood depends upon his holding down a job. The strains of working class existence are very real, but they are unknown to a Churchill. Randolph Churchill, in an illuminating passage in his autobiography, shows what a Churchill conceives as poverty by claiming that his family was "poor but honest"—although they could

afford to send him to Eton.

There is a lot of evidence to show that illness—or lack of it—is not entirely a matter of chance but one of social background. The Registrar General's Decennial 1958 Supplement pointed out that the places in this country where the average person stood the greatest chance of an early death were Salford, Liverpool, Manchester and Wigan. It is no coincidence that these are areas of dense population and that the death rates are largely caused by the high incidence of bronchitis. A few years after, in September 1963, Dr. Ian Richardson, of the school of social medicine at Aberdeen, said that among the people of North East Scotland chronic bronchitis was four times more prevalent in what he called the "lower" social classes than in the "upper."

What this means is that if we are born rich we have a better chance of staying healthy and living longer than if we are born poor. Churchill, ninety years old, was born rich.

Next, the business of the great man. It is a long time since the Second World War started, but there is no need for distance to lend enchantment to the part which Churchill is supposed to have played in the Allied victory. In the organs of capitalist opinion no praise is too lavish, no phrase too extravagant, to describe his period as wartime Prime Minister. Only a few small voices are to be heard trying to balance this picture, to point out the misjudgements which Churchill made and those of the men in whom he put his confidence. The late Lord Cherwell was one of these men and he made many mistakes. He was hopelessly wrong in his estimate of the effect of the allied bomber offensive. A recent book—*The Battle of the V. Weapons*—reveals that there was plenty of evidence that the Germans were preparing to launch rockets against this country, but Cherwell refused to believe it until it was too late. Yet Cherwell stayed in Churchill's favour, and was still there after the war.

Such evidence puts Churchill into perspective as a less than infallible man, who came into the Premiership with the customary history of mistakes. His name has always been linked with the massive, bloody muddle of Gallipoli. Randolph Churchill tells how a schoolmate refused to be his chum because his father had been killed at the Dardenelles, for which he blamed Winston Churchill. The periods which Churchill spent in posts like Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary were not outstanding for their brilliance—he did the jobs in much the same way, and with much the same futility, as any other politician.

For only one thing did he stand out. Between the wars he became the spokesman of the group which saw German capitalism as the greater threat to the established European powers. To stifle this threat Churchill was prepared to do a deal with any other country—even the Soviet Union, which he so quickly turned against after the war. An unforeseen twist to events between the wars might have made Churchill wrong, but in fact he turned out to be right: Germany was a bigger threat than Russia. This was what gave him the job of Prime Minister at the crucial time, and subsequently loaded him with the myth that he beat German capitalism almost on his own.

The Allied victory did not end Churchill's miscalculations and indiscretions. In 1945, British capitalism needed a political party which was prepared to push through a big programme of nationalisation, a State health scheme and the like. It needed a continuation of government control over things like building and direction of labour. It needed a party with an image of freshness, one which might repair the morale of a war weary working class by giving the impression of a deter-

mination to get on with the job of rebuilding Britain.

The Labour Party seemed to fill these needs pretty well and so they rode to power. Against this impressive tide of events, Churchill offered only an appeal to working class sentiment and his attempt to frighten everyone with his ruinously unwise "Gestapo" speech. When the votes were counted, the great man theory had once more been put in its place. The British working class had faithfully decided that the needs of British capitalism should take precedence over the ambitions of one man.

As the newspapers were anxious to point out, the 1945 election result did not mean that the voters had lost their respect for Churchill. Everywhere he went he was fêted. They all loved his funny bowler, his cigar, his V sign. With his jaw clamped, he epitomised the outraged nostalgia of every patriotic slum dweller for the days when the map was covered in pink and a British gunboat was enough to put any number of natives in their place. Good Old Winnie, they cried, in an ecstasy of admiration.

What did they have to thank Churchill for? Did they thank him for always being so militant in defence of the interests

of the British ruling class? Did they thank him for urging them on to the battlefields of the world—on to the dusty fly blown slopes at Gallipoli, or into the icy death of an Arctic convoy? Did they thank him for the slaughter of Dresden? For managing the *British Gazette* during the General Strike? For always, in fact, fighting the working class tooth and nail whenever they tried to stand out for their own interests?

A sardonic opinion, perhaps, bred by years of hammering against the solid brick wall of working class ignorance, is that the workers actually enjoy absorbing punishment. Treat them mean, a Tory minister once said, and keep them keen. Churchill has never treated the working class other than meanly; he has never disguised his contempt for them, he has never relaxed in his demands that they should accept whatever burdens and terrors capitalism has imposed on them. And the workers have kept keen. Now Churchill has reached ninety, and presumably has not much longer to live, they are actually grateful to him for all that he has done to them.

Could gratitude, or devotion, or plain damned stupidity, go farther than that?

IVAN

THE WAGES OF WISDOM

MANY working-class folk, scratching along as best they can on their meagre wages, cast envious eyes on the minority whose income is well above the average. Generally this high income is derived from rent, profit and interest, these things being in themselves a sign of property ownership. However, modern capitalism pays some people large salaries for performing functions that the capitalist class, or sections of them, often through the State apparatus, regard as useful.

When ordinary wage earners grumble about this, sure enough out come the same old arguments from their political and economic masters. To get first-class brains we must pay first-class money, they say. Thereupon the masses, taking another long steady look at their odd assortment of small change, think that they must indeed be dull fellows. Because they believe in and support property ownership, class society, and the wages system, there is no other attitude they can adopt; their only outlet for dissatisfaction is grumbling envy of each other.

The last Conservative Government, wanting to make the railways pay, acquired the aid of Dr. Beeching. We shall place the railways under the control of this businessman, they said, and

because he is so clever, we shall pay him £24,000 a year. Incidentally, the Conservative Government went on controlling not only the railways, but Dr. Beeching as well. Should one be naive—and, surprisingly many are in these matters—one would reason that a person earning £24,000 p.a. must be the Great Khan of business acumen—no task, even one as formidable as that of making British Railways solvent, could withstand such an intellectual demon.

However, the problems of capitalism are not all that easy to tackle. A social system based on buying and selling the things of life, where the very ownership of these things leads to conflict, is hardly conducive to firm control. Some items of recent news show that even the astute Dr. Beeching does not shine through very well.

The *Sun* reports that Dr. Beeching's run-down of services, in which some 3,600 covered trucks and an unknown number of open wagons have been condemned, was overdone. Now some Goods Depots have only one-third of the trucks they need. Trucks in Norfolk sold to scrap dealers are being hired back for the sugar beet harvest.

At the same time Mr. E. S. Fay, the Railway Board's Counsel, forecast a

£250 million deficit by the end of the year.

(He was applying to the Transport Tribunal for permission to increase season ticket charges.) He explained that the Railways Board had been guaranteed £450 million to meet any deficit over the first five years, but in two-fifths of the time, five-ninths of the money had been used.

Capitalism cannot be made into a neat, workable, smooth running operation. No doubt when estimates are made on such things as streamlining railways and making them solvent, the plans look waterproof enough. But what if prices and wages rise, avenues of future exploitation contract or expand? In no time at all, the plans are shot full of holes like a fish net.

Perhaps those who for ever argue that capitalism is worth retaining will laugh away the nonsense of paying one man £24,000 p.a. without affecting the bankruptcy of a rail system while the train drivers and signalmen's yearly wages are measured in hundreds.

To grumble, whine, protest and strike is of no great use if you are at the same time defending and maintaining capitalism. To defend the system is to deserve what it throws at you. JACK LAW

Libermanism: a new Russian policy

It has always been an effrontery that the Russian "Communists" should have joined the name of Lenin to those of Marx and Engels in the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, and that the opportunist theories of Lenin, claimed to be an extension of Marxist thought, should have been perpetuated by such a connection. For the purpose of emphasizing the drift of the Russian Revolution from alleged Socialism (which the Communist Party once claimed was the preliminary transitional period before the coming of Communism) to avowed Capitalism, we have no hesitation in de-Leninising Lenin and substituting the name of Professor Y. G. Liberman, a Kharkov economist.

Some months ago Mr. Khrushchev announced that arbitrarily planned production should give way to control by means of self regulating economic leaders, by which he meant the forces of supply and demand.

According to *The Times*, the new Soviet leadership has approved implementation of these "economic reforms" which means "a victory for the supply and demand system advocated by Professor Y. G. Liberman." The report goes on to say that the Soviet Government is considering a major decree to introduce the "Liberman System" in a large part of the consumer goods sector and that factory directors will have much greater freedom of action to plan output according to orders received and to fix retail prices. They will also have greater autonomy in raising money by way of bank loans for the purpose of improving or reconstructing their factories.

Wages will be determined by the factory managers instead of by remote planning agencies and "factory performance, instead of being measured in terms of fulfilment of gross output in roubles, will be gauged in terms of volume of goods actually sold in the stores, and in terms of profits."

It is said that this decree is being drafted at the end of a four month experiment in two clothing factories, as a result of which more clothing and shoe factories are to be converted to the "New System."

If factory performance is to be gauged in terms of profits arising from the volume of goods sold may we ask, without appearing too naive, what is "new" about that?

There is, of course, nothing new about it—what is new is that the Soviet Government is openly recognising that Capitalism exists in Russia and that the motive for production in the Capitalist System of Society is the realisation of profit on the sale of goods.

Also, what is new is the decentralisation of the point at which the profits are garnered.

The greatest antagonism which the Soviet Government has had to face has come from the agricultural interests. After the persecution of the *Kulaks* (peasant proprietors) in the earlier days of the Soviet administration, and the conversion of their smaller holdings into collective farms, the profit motive was still there, to such an extent that the apologetic booklet *Soviet Millionaires* had to be written!

Now, apparently, the realisation of profit in manufacture is to be the prime motive force for production in the smaller units of production. *Soviet Millionaires* dealt with the growth of personal fortunes among the Russian agriculturalists—is the time far distant when we can envisage a pamphlet being published to apologise for the growth of personal fortunes among the industrialists of Russia?

In the 1920s Lenin wrote that "State Capitalism would be a great step forward . . . that our enemy is the small capitalist, the small owner . . . the small bourgeoisie, with its economic

customs, habits and position." He also wrote that "To bring about State Capitalism at the present time means to establish the control and order formerly achieved by the propertied classes." Then after (mistakenly) referring to the existence of State Capitalism in Germany he transforms the words "State Capitalism" to "State Socialism" and says that, "If we possessed it in Russia the transition to complete Socialism would be easy, because State Socialism is centralisation control, Socialisation—in fact, everything that we lack. The greatest menace to us is the small bourgeoisie, which, owing to the history and economics of Russia, is the best organised class and which prevents us from taking the step on which depends the success of Socialism."

The fact which this completely ignores is that in 1917 the population of Russia did not understand, or want, Socialism. As this understanding and desire is a pre-requisite to the establishment of Socialism, nothing could proceed in Russia except the consolidation of Capitalism.

The Russian Revolution is the equivalent, allowing for the social and historical differences in the centuries of the English Revolution, the French Revolution, the German Amalgamation of Principalities, and the more recent Chinese Accession of the "Red Star Over China." In short, it is the breaking away of the nascent capitalist class from the feudal bonds which previously bound it.

The cry for "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" of the French Revolution is today echoed, in a way, by the factory managers of the clothing and shoe industries in Russia. They want liberty to fix the wages of their employees, something akin to the freedom of contract now operative in the Western World: they require equality to compete with their commercial brothers in the same industries, and fraternity which, in the capitalist world, means peace to produce goods for sale on home and export markets at a profit.

Never has there been a greater bamboozling of the World Working Class than that perpetrated by the Russian Communist Party. A whole generation of workers have been distracted by the chimera of Socialism in Russia from their true task of seeking their emancipation from the slavery of Capitalism.

Communists in all countries have completely mistaken the nature and social significance of the Russian Revolution and their propaganda, supporting every twist and turn of Russian politics, has deluded the working class for over 40 years. Labourites once generally accepted that the economic system in Russia was an advance over "private" or *laissez-faire* capitalism, although in more recent years they have deplored the dictatorial administration. Conservatives have easily been deluded into accepting that Communism was established in Russia, although their delusion is manifested in opposition, because they are automatically opposed to any organisation paying lip service to Marxism, Socialism or Communism.

Socialism did not exist and could not be established by the Bolsheviks in Russia. Perhaps the theories of Professor Liberman will help to finally bring about acceptance of the fact that Capitalism exists there.

Such acceptance will probably make easier our task of explaining the true nature of World capitalist society, it will clarify working class understanding of Marxist theory and convince the workers of the necessity to establish Socialism in five-fifths of the World.

N.S.

Lead kindly light

OCCASIONALLY the Labour Party dares to refer to itself as Socialist. But what do they mean? A clue may perhaps be gained from *A Faith To Fight For* by Eric Deakins.

Deakins has a very simple view of society and politics. Societies are based on Ideals, and the art of politics consists in maintaining or changing the Ideal basis of society. Present day society, capitalism, is based on Immoral Ideals; Socialism is a society based on Moral Ideals. It has an ethical basis; it is

A form of society based on the ideals of individual fulfilment, brotherhood, co-operation, tolerance, justice, charity, equality and service to the community.

The long-term aim of the Labour Party, says Mr. Deakins, is to realise these ideals. To do this it must appeal to the individual's Moral Conscience. Prompted by their consciences, individuals will come to realise that capitalism is immoral and will take steps to reconstruct society on a Moral basis. Mr. Deakin is, perhaps, not unaware that in order to gain power the Labour Party has pursued an opportunistic policy of fighting on a programme calculated to appeal to the individual's Self-Interest rather than to his Moral Conscience.

Mr. Deakin's own personal Moral Conscience seems too reasonably well informed (though it is incorrect on the date of the Taff Vale judgement — 1901 not 1904) and has dictated to him a complete political programme including among other things: land nationalisation, reform of the Lords, nationalisation of cotton, aircraft and shipbuilding, abolition of public schools, comprehensive schools, opposition to the Common Market and many other policies so well loved by the Labour Leftwinger.

Mr. Deakins devotes a couple of pages to a criticism of the position of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

The S.P.G.B., in its role as self-appointed custodian of the Socialist conscience, insists that Socialism will only come about when the workers recognise that it is in their economic interest to create a Socialist society. There are two grave dangers in this thesis: one being that it is wrong to direct a Socialist appeal to individual conscience, the other being that it ignores the implications of the term "workers." To appeal to self-interest is to deny the ethical basis of Socialism, and so render its attainment impossible.

Let us clear up two simple points straight away. The Socialist Party does not appeal to individual self-interest but to the class interest of the working class.

We say that Socialism is in the interests of the working class and that it is up to them to establish it. Second, Mr. Deakins implies that we are materialists in the "parsons' sense, to the detriment of so-called spiritual values. This is so much nonsense. Socialism will create the conditions for all-round individual development, both practically and intellectually. Mr. Deakins should consult our pamphlet *Art, Labour and Socialism* by William Morris.

It is, however, true that we do not appeal to morality, that we deny that Socialism has any ethical basis. Socialism is a system of society and systems of society are not based on ideals, "good" or "bad." A superficial look at history might suggest, for instance, that feudalism was based on Honour and capitalism on Selfishness. In fact, systems of society are based on the relations men enter into in producing wealth. In property societies, that is societies in which access to the means of production is not free, these relations are class relations. The section of the community having control over access to the means of production are enabled to live off the surplus labour of the producing class.

Such systems of exploitation would be unable to survive if the various means of social control did not back up the dominance of the privileged class. The state, as the centre of social control, is the most important of these means. The other means of influencing men's behaviour and attitudes such as religion, morality, literature, art and so on, similarly operate to preserve the system. Thus Mr. Deakins is looking at things upside-down: ideals are not the bases of social systems, rather are they a part of the social superstructure.

When the mode of production changes enough to shift the centre of industrial

control, a process is set in motion which sooner or later brings about a change in the entire social superstructure. A new class, brought to prominence by the economic change, organises itself politically to win control of the state. At the same time, new ideas appear in religion, morality and the like, reflecting the interests of the rising class. Eventually the institutions and ideas of the previous dominant class are swept away.

This is how social change comes about and there is no reason to suppose that the change from capitalism to socialism will be any different. The development of large-scale industry has socialized production and brought into prominence a propertyless working class quite capable of running the productive system without the owning class. To complete the change which this development calls for is the task of the working class. If this class is to triumph it must become conscious of itself and organise to capture political power. The task of Socialists is to help such understanding come about by appealing, not to morality or conscience, but to the interests of the working class as a class. Socialism is thus a class issue, not a moral issue.

The emancipation of the working class involves also the emancipation of all mankind. The working class can free itself only by ushering in Socialism, a self-controlling world community in which production will be carried on purely and simply to satisfy the needs of the community.

The nonconformist conscience helped the capitalist class to power, but a refurbished and secularized version of it is of no use to the working class. Socialism cannot be instituted by a series of measures based on the dictates of conscience. It demands a change in the real basis of society, a social revolution.

A.J.B.

The Hungarian Uprising

Hungary 56 (Solidarity book 3/6) by Andy Anderson is an interesting account and analysis of the Hungarian rising of October-November 1956, written from what is basically an Anarchist point of view.

When the Red Army overran East Europe at the end of the war they had to install some sort of government in the areas concerned; in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary all they could use were the remnants of the previous pro-fascist ruling groups. Eventually, through their control of the police force they were able to set up police states, manned by loyal native stooges, similar to their own in Russia. The countries of East Europe were particularly harshly exploited—even by capitalist standards—to rebuild the Russian economy. As time went on the police state regime began to have an effect on economic growth. Attempts to drive the workers too hard merely resulted in increasing inefficiency, absenteeism and even sabotage.

Following the death of Stalin in 1953 the Russian rulers began a new course; a similar process began to take place in other parts of East Europe. Riots in Poland eventually brought the Gomulka regime to power. In Hungary the Stalinists under Rakosi were a little more short-sighted towards a demand, led by the Petofi Circle and the Writers Union, for a more "liberal regime." The Russians realised that the situation was explosive and Rakosi was removed. A number of former Titoists, including one Janos Kadar were rehabilitated.

The Hungarian uprising actually began on October 23rd when the Secret Police, the A.V.O., fired on a crowd demonstrating outside the radio station. The next day Russian tanks were called in but were forced to retreat. The government now under Imre Nagy, had lost control. Workers Councils, loosely linked together, organised the distribution of food supplies and the resistance to the Russians. On October 26th, the rebels, published their programme which included demands for the withdrawal of Russian troops, a popular government under Nagy, recognition for the Workers Councils, higher wages, higher pensions, less piece-work, higher family allowances, more houses

and so on. During the next week the Nagy government tried to regain control by offering concessions. Nagy himself went so far as to call for a neutral Hungary. This was too much for the Russians, who launched a counter-attack on November 4th. Nagy appealed to the U.N. and took refuge in the Yugoslav embassy. A puppet government under Kadar took over. Eventually, with the help of the Red Army, the central government regained control. Resistance continued for many months but the rising had been crushed. Estimates of how many Hungarians were killed vary between 20,000 and 50,000.

What was the significance of this? There is a lot of truth in the saying that revolution is delayed reform. Political power can't hold back economic forces for ever. In East Europe, bureaucratic state capitalist regimes were standing in the way of economic efficiency. A modern capitalist economy cannot for long be run by police state methods; it demands the consent, even if only passive, of the workers. Skilled and educated workers cannot be coerced into working to the best of their ability. Yugoslavia was the first to move away from this system, when decentralisation was begun there in 1950. The rest of East Europe was held up by Stalin's grip. After his death, however, the Russian leaders were able to act on what must have been obvious for some time: that Stalin's methods were inefficient. With "de-Stalinization" encouraged in Russia, the satellites also were able to adopt a less onerous policy.

In Poland, the change was achieved by opportune reforms and concessions. In Hungary the story was different. The Stalinist government there left the reforms too late and lost control. In circumstances like this, where the established machinery of government breaks down, a substitute appears. In Russia this took the form of the Soviets or Councils. Something similar happened in Italy in 1921 when the workers took over the factories. What these episodes show is that where the capitalist government machine breaks down and the capitalists lose control, the workers don't simply let anarchy reign, they do their best to organise something themselves. So it was in Hungary.

Anarchists have always made great play of happenings such as these. They did so over the Paris Commune of 1871, which they saw as the beginning of the dissolution of the State into a federation of free communes. The anarchists were against all permanent machinery and the principle of representation. To imagine that the modern productive system can be controlled without a permanent administrative machine is so much Utopian nonsense. Nevertheless such views are encouraged by events like the Hungarian rising. Anderson tells us that this was:

far more than a national uprising or than attempt to change one set of rulers for another. It was a social revolution in the fullest sense of the term. Its object was a fundamental change in the relations of production, in the relations between ruler and ruled in factories, pits, and on the land.

and, New organs of struggle were created: the Workers' Councils which embodied, in embryo, the new society they were seeking to achieve.

This is going too far. The Hungarian working class were not organised consciously for Socialism. They were organised, certainly, but organised to keep life going and to resist the Russians.

Under capitalism there are many kinds of working class organisations: trade unions, political parties, tenants associations, friendly societies and so on—formed for a variety of different purposes. A working class organisation can only be considered revolutionary when it consciously aims to replace capitalism. The Hungarian Workers' Councils do not come into this category. This is not to belittle them: they were examples of what the working class can do in difficult circumstances. The heroic resistance of the Hungarian working class to totalitarian Stalinism will go down in the annals of working class history. There is nothing to be gained from seeing in the Hungarian tragedy something which just wasn't there; it wasn't the beginning of a social revolution.

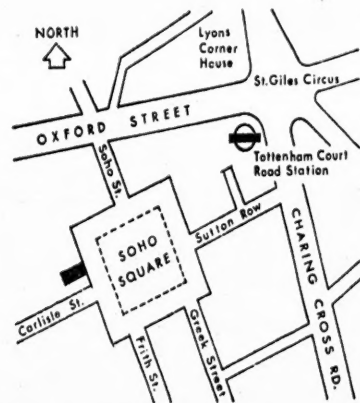
A.L.B.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

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MEETINGS

BLOOMSBURY LECTURES
Asquith Room, 2 Soho Sq, W1
Sundays, 8 pm (doors open 7.30)



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10th January
SOCIALISTS AND EDUCATION
Speaker: K. Knight

17th January
MARXISM, THE STATE AND SOCIAL REFORM
Speaker: M. Harris

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THE POVERTY OF AFFLUENCE
Speaker: P. Lawrence

31st January
A SOCIALIST LOOKS AT GEORGE ORWELL
Speaker: D. Donaldson

7th February
LABOUR'S FIRST 100 DAYS
Speaker: R. McDowell

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Clarendon Press Institute
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Friday, 29th January, 8 pm

THE NATIONAL QUESTION
Speaker: E. Grant

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MUSSOLINI:
A STUDY IN DECEIT
Speaker: R. Russell

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BURNS:
HIS LIFE AND TIMES
Speaker: T. Mulheron

31st January
ENGELS:
HIS LIFE AND TEACHINGS
Speaker: J. Richmond

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11th January
PRICES AND INFLATION
Speaker: E. Hardy

25th January
MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY
Speaker: G. Maclatchie

WEST LONDON
Westcott Lodge, Hammersmith
Lower Mall (facing river)
Fridays, 8 pm

8th January
15th CENTURY POLITICS
Speaker: L. Dale

15th January
A SOCIALIST LOOKS AT GEORGE ORWELL
Speaker: D. Donaldson

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54 Sish Lane, Stevenage
Monday, 11th January, 8 pm

87 DAYS OF LABOUR GOVERNMENT
Speaker: C. May

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PARTY PUBLICITY
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SOCIALISM OR ANARCHISM
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20th January
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Speaker: K. Knight

27th January
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PASSING SHOW continued from page 16

age of workers—including "coloured guys"—to fight and die. Does our nut case think that the problems of capitalism are any less pressing because of this second lot of senseless heroism? If he does, he had better think again.

In the future, capitalism will develop the African states and

they will all have their own armies, coloured workers trained to kill in the interests of their ruling classes. The Congo is only a foretaste of what is to come, and it will not be a very pretty story. What is needed is a great deal less heroism and a great deal more hard thinking about the Socialist answer.

Jumble sales

A recent small article in *The Guardian* about the decline of jumble sales took me back a few years to my schooldays. It was the period just before the outbreak of the second world war when unemployment was much greater and every penny was precious; and so it was considered particularly daring of our headmaster to decide on a jumble sale as a means of raising funds for a new radio for the school. Useless to try and squeeze the money out of the education authorities in those days, anyway.

The sale was, I remember, a great success and the school got its radio; but wandering around the building seeing the heaps of accumulated junk, I can remember wondering just where it all came from and where it would all go to. At the end of the evening the helpers tried to give away the remains of their stalls, but with limited success—nobody wanted the stuff even as a gift—and eventually it was bought by a job lot dealer.

The jumble sale is perhaps symbolic not only of working

class poverty—for who would buy but those unable to afford better—but of another horror of capitalism, the veritable mountain of rubbish which it throws up. Most of it is of poor quality even when new and even the jumble sale often does not mark the end of its life. Since the end of the war, production has increased in many fields and with it the incidence of trash ("built in obsolescence" is the modern euphemism for it); ironically this has assisted in the decline in the jumble sales because the stuff is so poor after a short life that it wouldn't grace even a rickety trellis table in a musty church hall. So the faint chance of a bargain buy is even fainter now, and workers are looking elsewhere.

In this little snippet of news is a lesson we should never forget. Trash is one of the many objectionable facets of capitalist society, and even the best it can give workers is not worthy of human beings. In fact it is trash for most of us, and a trashy existence to match.

E.T.C.

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6th January
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13th January
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20th January
A BRIEF SKETCH OF HISTORY

27th January
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The **WESTERN SOCIALIST**

Journal for Socialism
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BROMLEY GROUP

announce that they are organising a series of meetings at the New Hackwood Hotel, Widmore Road, Bromley.

Subjects and speakers to be announced.
The first meeting is on Wednesday, 27th January, 8 pm

ISLINGTON MEETING

Co-op Hall
129 Seven Sisters Road, N.7
Thursday, 25th February, 8 pm

THE SOCIALIST APPROACH TO IMMIGRATION

Speaker: T. Giles

SOCIALIST STANDARD: Published by the Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. Printed by R. E. Taylor & Son, Ltd (T.U.) 67 Banner Street, London E.C.1.

THE PASSING SHOW

Scientology nonsense

It's a far cry from the day when the American L. Ron Hubbard set down his early psychological theories in a slim book under the name of *Dianetics*. Since then his organisation has opened centres in many parts of the world and the general body of his ideas is now called *Scientology* (The "Science of Wisdom" whatever that may mean), but the proposition of the Engram (harmful mental impression gained during extreme pain, exhaustion or other physical crisis) remains the basis of his methods. He claims, and perhaps in some cases has achieved, great success for his mental "processing" as it is called, although as far as I know, no independent assessment of Scientology has yet been made, and we have to accept Hubbard's word for it. However, to say that is one thing, but quite another to hear it said that the engram is at the bottom of all our problems, from illness to war and back again. Even a fall on the ice has an engram lurking around somewhere to explain it, I was once told. That the night was dark and the ice slippery, just would not satisfy scientologists.

Over the years the Hubbard organisation has tacked onto other and wilder concepts. There was for instance the "Church of Scientology" in support of the God idea, and attempts to prove the theory of reincarnation by discovering engrams carried over from a previous life. One of their spokesmen even assured me once that we can take on different forms in different lives if we wish it—so think of this the next time you are tempted to envy your cat stretched lazily by the fire without a care in the world.

In the political sphere, Hubbard has remained implacably "anti-communist." We don't know just how much engrams Stalin or Krushchev are supposed to have had—the Scientology people were never allowed behind the iron curtain to find out. Apart from this, Hubbard's ventures into politics

seem to have been rare, which is just as well, because on these occasions he doesn't add anything useful to our knowledge—quite the reverse, if the Nov. 1964 issue of his journal *Certainty* is any guide.

Three of its four pages are given over to an essay in nonsense called "Socialism and Scientology" dedicated to "our friend the late Hugh Gaitskell." It contains various gems of unwisdom, such as:

The primary danger of Socialism . . . is that it seeks to remove all dangers from the environment, which it cannot do without a huge bureaucracy . . .

The degrees of Socialism are measured by the extent to which they arrange to deny reward for individual or group contribution . . .

And how's this for a bit of double-think:

So we have no quarrel with charity, we have no quarrel with a state devoted to it. We quarrel only with the end product . . .

There are plenty more where these came from, but they are enough to show how little Mr. Hubbard really knows about Socialism. He equates it with just about everything except what it really is, and says really so little that we wonder why he bothered at all. But the last few lines may give us a clue.

Can the great dream of Socialism succeed this time? It can if it itself accepts the help of Scientology . . .

Can it then be a thinly veiled attempt to "sell" Scientology to the Labour Party? Just think of the fillip to his organisation if he could claim the support of such a massive body. Good for Scientology; good perhaps for the Labour Party, but absolutely useless for Socialism.

The lunatic fringe

Perhaps we are better known than you'd think. What I mean to say is, we get all sorts of letters from all sorts of people and places. Some of them (the letters I mean) are sympathetic, some are hostile, and some are frankly baffling, like those we used to get from one God-fearing old lady in Canada who hated all the Royal Family except Prince Phillip, and who never used a dot or comma, probably because she was unaware of their existence. "Why doesn't he come and live amongst us Canadians who would know how to look after him not like that lot back at Buckingham Palace from yours Mrs. A—M—."

Well we never did work out an answer to that one and perhaps the lady got tired of waiting, because she hasn't written for some time now. Or perhaps she managed to work out for herself the answers to the posers she set us with such vigour and regularity, and decided to save the postage. But at least she was not afraid to tell us her name and address, which

is more than can be said for some of the other not-so-harmless nut cases.

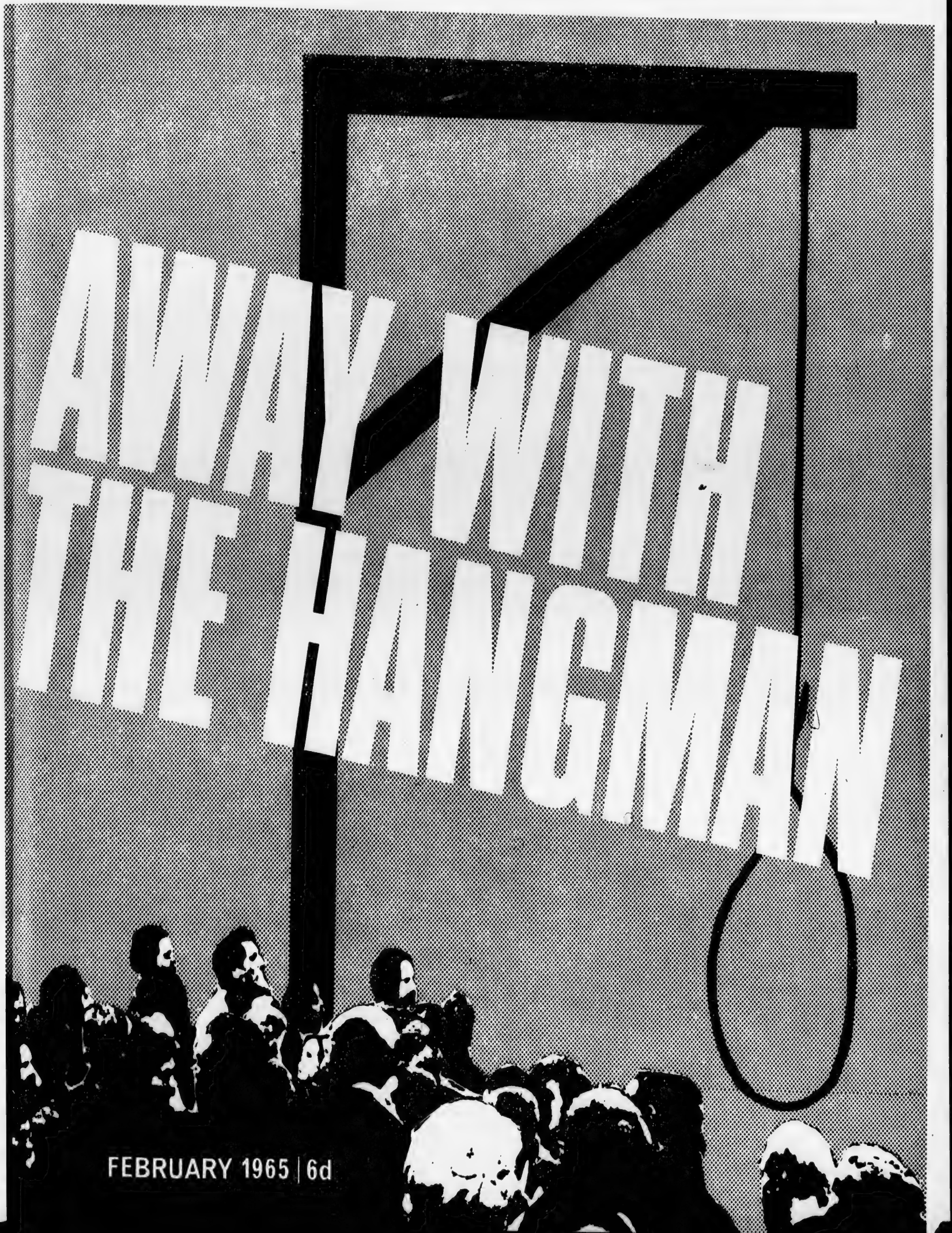
A package was handed to me the other day. Attached to a variety of cuttings from such high quality newspapers as the *News of the World* and *The People* was a brief unsigned message, noteworthy again for its lack of punctuation: "HERES THE ANSWER TO THE COLOURED GUYS LET THEM GET INTO BATTLE AS BRITAINS GLORIOUS HEROES DID AND WE'LL HEAR NO MORE NONSENSE FROM THEM." So look no further for the solution to the racial problem—our correspondent has found it for us, and the heroes he has in mind are the boys who disappeared by the million in the 1914-18 trenches.

He's a bit out of date in his choice of wars, of course. Few people try to pretend now that the heroism of those days did any good or solved any problems. Since then, we have had another world war and some smaller ones too, with no short-

[continued on previous page]

Socialist Standard

Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



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visitors are cordially invited to every meeting

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That is in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



Flitting hither and thither

Despite many years' experience to the contrary, working class men and women still cling assiduously to the belief that politicians flitting hither and thither to meetings in various parts of the world can solve the problems which capitalism produces.

This is an impression which capitalist politicians encourage and which some of them may even believe, at least at the start of their careers. It was the Labour Party who claimed in 1945, for instance, that they would stand a better chance of settling differences with Russia than the Tories, because of their better understanding of Soviet politics. But in the event, Mr. Molotov said "No" just as frequently to Ernest Bevin as he would have done to any Tory foreign secretary. Since those days we have had any number of international conferences, meetings of heads of state, not to mention sessions of that prime piece of organised post-war futility the United Nations. Yet capitalism has steered its usual bumpy course from crisis to crisis, at times drifting perilously close to the brink of another world war.

These are the things to bear in mind when considering the news that the British and Russian premiers have exchanged invitations to visit each other's country this year. Mr. Wilson has expressed pleasure at the prospect; he told reporters he knew Mr. Kosygin well, and had had a long talk with him when last in Moscow. Which was no doubt intended to foster the idea that such cosy informality has the edge over the protocol of the conference table. Many people would agree with Mr. Wilson. They think that if direct and personal contact can be established—like friendly neighbours chatting across the back garden fence—international rivalry will ease and relations between the states improve in some mysterious way. But they are wrong.

When the Labour government took office last October, they were soon caught up in the whirl of international negotiations. Mr. Wilson went early to Washington and ministers were scattered about the globe at various conferences. Mr. Brown has recently been to Sweden. But they are not the only ones to go trotting around like this. At the time of writing, Chinese high-ups are busy getting neighbourly with Indonesia's Sukarno, and it is only a few months ago that President De Gaulle returned from a visit to South America. It is the sort of move that statesmen are always making, but whether the discussions are informal or otherwise, they will be concerned with the interests of the particular capitalist classes involved, and not with those of the working class.

Wilson's government, for example, have been trying to re-assess British defence policy and standing in Europe, and the Moscow visit is only a sequel to Washington last Autumn. It could be that there is a big re-alignment of powers coming as a result of China's emergence as a nuclear power. Possibly Russia will draw closer to the West. The question of Britain's entry into the Common Market may be re-opened (despite strong Labour opposition to it in the past), and some agreements may have to be re-negotiated. Still others may be scrapped altogether in the tussle to keep British capitalism in the running among the major powers.

All this will doubtless be represented as being of vital concern to every one of us. There will be talk of "our" interests, "our" exports, "our" foreign policy, etc., when in fact workers have no stake in any of it. For most of us the wage packet is the limit of our horizon, and whether Britain is in or out of the Common Market will have no effect on that basic fact, any more than will the efforts of all the political leaders.

Leaders come and go, but capitalism outlives them all, bringing the usual trail of misery and destruction in its wake. Only a Socialist working class can do anything about that.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m. Next meeting February 28th.

Away with hanging

"They pull the lever and away he goes," Mr. Albert Pierrepoint, public hangman, in evidence to the Royal Commission on Capital Punishment.

ONE of the conclusions of the last Royal Commission on Capital Punishment was that, in the words of one of its witnesses, hanging is "... certain, painless, simple and expeditious."

Whatever the truth of this (and there are some horrible rumours which contradict it) the fact is that hanging was not originally designed as a quick and humane method of dispatching a criminal. The poor man was often dead before they hung him up. The idea was to display him in as humiliating way as possible, strung up in public for the mob to spit and jeer at—and to take warning from.

Thus hanging was regarded as a particularly abject and dishonourable form of execution. Beheading used to be considered more dignified and soldiers, immersed in the fatuities of military chivalry, still prefer the firing squad.

The capital crimes to which public hangings were supposed to be a massive deterrent could once be as trivial as stealing five shillings from a shop. In 1830 there were no less than 220 offences which carried the death penalty. But far from deterring the criminal, public hangings were something like carnival events for him. When they were abolished in 1868, *The Times* sighed with relief:

We shall not in future have to read how, the night before an execution, thousands of the worst characters in England ... met beneath the gallows to pass the night in drinking and buffoonery; ... how, at the very foot of the gallows, they committed with impunity deeds of lawless violence, scarcely less reprehensible than the crime of which they had come to witness the expiation.

The end of public hanging still left a lot of gruesome ritual, which has been slowly dismantled. No longer is a black flag hoisted and a bell tolled, or a notice posted, at a prison after an execution. No longer does the executed person suffer the last indignity of being left hanging for an hour after his death.

These reforms left the execution a cleaner, more clinical affair, but still a ritual. The condemned prisoner had to be weighed and measured, and secretly observed by the hangman, before the length of his drop could be calculated. (There is an official table on which this calculation was done.) The execution had to be rehearsed with a bag of sand as a stand-in. Finally, amid unbearable tension within the prison, the execution itself.

Now, it seems, the whole thing is finished. After about 150 years of battle, the abolitionists' appear to have won. Unless something unexpected—and, let us be clear, unplanned for—happens in the House of Lords, Mr. Sidney Silverman's private member's Bill will soon become law. The hangman's noose has rattled and jerked in this country for the last time.

The origins of capital punishment are obscure; in Saxon England a killing could be expiated by payment of blood money. The method of execution has varied; beheading, stoning and impaling have all been used. The offences which carried the death penalty have also varied. The 18th Century was a bumper period for the executioners; 156 offences were made capital between 1714 and 1830.

The first mumblings of opposition were heard in the early nineteenth century. In 1830 Sir Samuel Romilly tried to introduce a Bill to abolish the capital penalty for stealing five shillings from a shop. It soon became obvious that, to avoid the severity of the death sentence, juries were acquitting guilty

men. Plainly, the interests of capitalist law and order demanded that something be done and thus began the long, slow, retreat of the hangman.

In 1832 cattle stealing was removed from the list of capital crimes; in 1833 housebreaking. By 1837 there were only fifteen capital offences left and by 1861 the number was down to four, where it stayed until 1957, when the Homicide Act changed the definition of murder.

The restriction or the abolition of capital punishment has always provided a battleground of controversy. The Chief Justice of England, Lord Ellenborough, opposing Romilly's 1810 Bill, said:

... the expediency of justice and the public security require that there should not be a remission of capital punishment in this part of the criminal law.

This sort of argument has always been used by those in favour of hanging, who have conjured up lurid prospects of crime running rife once the shadow of the hangman was removed.

In 1930 a Select Committee recommended the experimental abolition of capital punishment for five years, but no action was taken. In 1938 a motion in similar terms was carried by the House of Commons, but was also ignored. In 1949 the House of Lords, its benches thick with blue blooded backwoodsmen, threw out an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill which would have suspended hanging for five years. The Labour government, perhaps with a sigh of relief at the avoidance of an electorally tricky issue, pushed the Bill through without the amendment.

Then came the Royal Commission, to enquire into the modification—not abolition—of the death penalty and the Homicide Act of 1957, full of anomalies and causing more dissatisfaction than ever. All the way along the line the reformers have been bitterly resisted. At one time the bishops and the judges were solidly against any alteration in the law; now many of the bishops and some of the judges are on the other side.

Lord Ellenborough is dead, but his ideas go marching on. These are some of the arguments offered in the Commons against the Silverman Bill: "... we are going to get more children murdered, and it will be entirely Mr. Silverman's fault." "I do believe you can deter the professional criminal who goes and acquires a pistol, and goes out to rob..."

This sort of argument is almost wholly inspired by emotion, and although it is easy to become emotional when contemplating the murder of a child, or a revolting sex murder, or a cold-blooded shooting, we should remember that pathological brutality is not confined to murderers. When Derek Bentley was hanged, the *Manchester Guardian* reported that among the crowd of several hundred outside the prison were people who regularly attended executions. One of them remarked: "Pretty small turn out, all considered. Haven't missed one of these in fifteen years." And one of the disquieting facts unearthed by the Royal Commission was that there were an average of five unsolicited applications a week for the job of hangman.

In any case, facts and experience should outweigh emotion, and the facts leave little room for doubt in the matter.

The arguments in favour of capital punishment usually fall under three headings: That society should take its revenge for a murder; that murderers should be restrained; and the most effective way of doing this is to kill them; that the death penalty is the surest deterrent to murder.

These arguments are typically negative. Revenge is quite useless to the murderer's victim and so is restraint by execution. In any case, the number of murderers who need restraining—who are so deranged that they are liable to commit a second murder—is very small indeed. Both these arguments ignore the positive fact that the death penalty deprives society of a good chance of preventing future murders, because it destroys the best source of discovering why the murderer committed his crime.

Finally, the supposed great deterrent does not deter. All experience abroad, in places where the death penalty has been abolished, indicates that it has no effect on the incidence of murder. In Italy, indeed, the ending of capital punishment in 1945 (it was first abolished in 1890, but reintroduced under Mussolini) coincided with a decline in the incidence of murder.

It is true that since Mr. Silverman's Bill was introduced there has been a sudden upsurge of murders and shootings. With or without capital punishment, crime waves have been known before. There was one in the late forties, attributed to a backlash of wartime conditions and training. In early 1961, there were seventeen murders in one period of only twenty-three days.

The annual figure of the number of murders known to the police was rising before the 1957 Homicide Act. A little time after the Act became law the murder figure fell, then rose, then fell again.

What does this prove? The Royal Commission called up a world wide survey on capital punishment by the American criminologist, Professor Thorsten Sellin. He summed up his conclusions:

... whether the death penalty is used or not ... both death penalty States and abolition States show rates (of murder) which suggest that these rates are conditioned by other factors than the death penalty.

The abolitionists' case, then, is made. Even by capitalism's standards, the death penalty is an outworn slice of more barbaric days. But the issue should not be allowed to get out of proportion.

A certain amount of fuss was made about the fact that a free vote was allowed on Mr. Silverman's Bill, leaving M.P.s to vote as what they call their conscience guided them. That may be all very well when the House is discussing something like capital punishment, which after all is only concerned with human lives and then with only about a couple of hundred of them a year.

But the vast majority of crime is not against people; it is against the property laws and privileges which are an essential part of capitalist society. When Parliament is debating these, there is never a free vote and no member exhibits a conscience. The Whips are on, and voting is strictly on party lines.

The opponents of capital punishment—men like Mr. Silverman, Victor Gollancz, Lord Gardiner—have argued that hanging is a futile barbarity. But at the same time they have supported the social system which is just as barbarous, just as futile—and universal in the degradation which it imposes.

Soon after the debate on the Silverman Bill, for example, the Soviet Union essayed yet another sequence in the endless minuet of disarmament talks, by proposing the renunciation of atomic weapons. The United States, who know the routine well, responded in the expected way; they rejected the proposal as "insincere" and instead called on China to sign the Test Ban Treaty.

This is playing with almost universal death and destruction.

Yet no M.P.'s conscience was offended and there will be no Private Members Bill to abolish the cause of nuclear weapons.

In the same debate, Brigadier Terence Clarke, Tory M.P. for Portsmouth West, said that the abolition of hanging should be referred to the British public. This does not, of course, mean that members of Parliament intend to consult us on all matters of life and death. We shall not be asked whether we want any more Bomb tests, nor shall our opinions be sought on a possible future declaration of war. The use of nuclear weapons has never been the subject of a plebiscite, and never will be.

Brigadier Clarke is typical of the people who regard murder, and other crime, as an isolated personal failing, unconnected with social influences. To them, criminals are evil, and should be punished in accordance with their crime.

To say the least this is an inadequate conception and not only because its distinction between "criminal" and "legal" killing is convenient to capitalist society. The act of killing an "enemy" in wartime is specifically excluded from the legal definition of murder. Brutal murderers in uniform are heroes; the same sort of person in civvies is a vicious thug.

Crime, like so many other social problems, needs a completely new approach, free of the restrictions arising from the private property basis of capitalism. We have already pointed out that the mass of crime consists of offences against property. To abolish capitalism would wipe all of them out.

Let us go further. The end of capitalism will mean the end of the poverty and the social conceits which are a persistent incentive to violent crime. It will mean the end of the slums where violence festers and where people are in some ways more like beasts than human beings. It will mean the end of the frustrated, the desperate, the sensation-seekers brutalized by the fabulous world of the trash fiction heroes.

It will mean that people will have the chance to behave socially, humanely and to live undistorted lives. In that society of freedom, crime will be an incredible irrelevance. There may be an infinitesimal number of murders, committed by the congenitally sick who wreck their derangements in violence. For the first time in history, such people will be dealt with, in freedom, with sympathy—and effectively.

We have a long way to go, and what sort of a milestone is Mr. Silverman's Bill? It is no more than a creaky, reluctant step away from a primitive ritual—by a social system which prefers its barbarians to be more sophisticated.

IVAN

Spring School

at CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, WC1
on SATURDAY, MARCH 6th

Two lectures given by E. Hardy

2.30 pm **THEORY**

5.00 pm **PRACTICE**

There will be a tea break at 4 pm, and from 7.30 to 10.30 pm a social evening has been arranged with refreshments and music.

Food burners at work again

EVER since socialists first appeared and made the case for abolishing capitalism, they have had to contend with opponents voicing variations on the common theme of retaining that system. The different groups did not admit or always realise that they were at one in defending capitalism, and outwardly they did not even seem to be united. There were those who said that capitalism would be quite satisfactory if only governments would stop interfering and impeding—we have a relic still in Mr. Enoch Powell. Others thought that it would work well if people would mend their ways and not be greedy. This group is always with us. And those who thought that the crying need is for better or wiser men at the helm of state—Liberals or Labour when the government is Conservative and Liberal and Conservative when the government is Labour. And those who believe that the system is essentially sound but that its abuses must be tackled as they show themselves in the light of new ideas and through new acts of Parliament. Actually this last category takes in almost all those who in practice hinder the movement to Socialism, including that most ineffectual band who for a century have been saying that Socialism is absolutely necessary but not just now, not until this or that evil has been removed.

All of these reformers agree with each other in rejecting the Socialist argument that we can and should have a social system which will have no place for prices, wages, profits etc. They say that the human race cannot do without these things, and in any event has no need to waste time trying to do so because there is nothing wrong with them in principle, only with the way they are used. So at each General Election we start a new round of schemes supposed to rid us of worries about prices, wages, strikes, monopolies and so on.

And each succeeding election finds things just the same except that the government and opposition may have changed places.

Just at the moment it is prices which occupy pride of place in the list of public complaints.

The most common complaint is that prices are "too high" and everybody blames everybody else for it. (Not least the newspapers which have put up their own prices during the past 12 months). All the complainers agree that somebody ought to do something about it, without explaining exactly what should be done and what level of prices would be regarded as just the right one.

The very rash might rush in and say that the right level is the lowest level but in the midst of the hullabaloo about prices that are too high there are some agonised cries about prices that are too low.

There are several aspects of the problem of prices. First there are the economic laws which explain why different articles have different prices—why an ounce of gold has a higher price than the same weight of silver, and lead a higher price than coal. Basically this is explained by the amount of human labour necessary for the production of each kind of article.

Then there are the laws which explain the upward or downward movements of the price level as a whole—why for example the general price level here is three or more times what it was in 1938, or why the price level fell heavily and continually for 10 years or more in the Nineteen twenties and thirties.

Also there are the upward and downward movements of the price of any article which came under the head of fluctuations due to variations in supply and demand. It is these fluctuations that concern us here.

If the supply of an article falls in relation to "demand" prices will go up; and if demand falls in relation to supply they will go down. It works against the background that everyone wants high prices for what he sells and low prices for what he buys and will take advantage of any circumstances which help him to get what he wants. Greedy and anti-social? Maybe, but that is what capitalism is and how it works, and the working of capitalism needs price fluctuations, as a corrective for over and under supply in relation to the demand of the market.

Governments do from time to time imagine they can have a price system without its "abuses": they try to control and reduce prices irrespective of the market conditions, only to find that they have created a "black market."

The people who want a price system but do not want to let it operate are constantly being shocked by demonstrations of the system functioning normally.

So it was that between the wars we were told how iniquitous it was that with millions of people in want of food, wheat was being burned. It was burned because there was so much more than the market would absorb that its price had fallen to unprofitable levels. The same was true of coffee and some other commodities. From a human standpoint of course it was iniquitous but how else can capitalism, which produces for the market, operate except in terms of the market?

An alternative to actual destruction is to let the depressed price have direct effect by ruining the producers and thus reducing production. Another it to hold the surplus off the market as has happened with coffee, wheat and other products when the interests concerned are sufficiently influential to get governments to intervene and bear the cost—as in U.S.A.

A "simple" solution that is suggested is for governments to give away the surplus, but this aggravates the problem since it both depresses prices and deprives other would-be sellers of a market.

The one thing that all the reformers agreed on was that destruction and restriction, and unemployed men and resources, must never again be allowed to happen. Expansion and abundance were on the banners and Keynes the prophet.

But capitalism has not changed. Though, as the authorities agree, the number of malnourished people in the world is increasing, burning and restriction are still with us. Last Autumn it was reported from Southern Rhodesia that, following a bumper tobacco crop and falling prices a scheme for restricting production had been adopted. The same wind struck Australia and some 200 tons of good tobacco were burned near Brisbane in December last.

Cocoa too has run into trouble. Too much has been produced for the demands of the market and in November last the six countries in the Cocoa Producers Alliance, Ghana, Nigeria, Brazil, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Togo decided to destroy cocoa stocks to help keep up the price. The following was reported by the *Times* on 12th December from Accra:

Sir Tsibu Darku, the Chairman of Ghana's Cocoa Marketing Board, today put the torch to about 500 tons of cocoa which went up in flames near here. He said the bonfire was the first of a series which would go on until they had completely destroyed two per cent of Ghana's basic quota, to give effect to a decision of the alliance of cocoa producing countries.

But a *Financial Times* correspondent last December doubted if this would be effective—"most dealers feel that far more than the present suggestion of two per cent of the six member's basic quota should be burnt." He thought they would have to choose between accepting lower prices and restricting

production.

This, of course, will not prevent the *Financial Times* from urging greater production as the right policy for Britain and other countries.

Brazil is one of the cocoa group worried about the "over-production," committed to destruction of some of the surplus. In 1943 the Brazilian Government thought to solve its cocoa problem by nationalising the export of cocoa but gave up the idea in 1952.

It was Brazil that was mostly involved in the destruction of coffee before the war. As it is now reported that efforts of coffee producers to keep up prices in a falling market were failing, they may soon again be destroying coffee as well as cocoa.

Next on the list may be bananas. Fierce competition of West Indian banana producers has pronounced what is described in *The Times* (29th December) as "a collapse of the banana market."

A spokesman of the Jamaica Banana Board said:

This is the most calamitous situation the Jamaican banana industry has faced since the war and could be as bad as anything that has ever happened in all our banana history.

These are examples of over supply and calamity through depressed prices. But capitalism is nothing if not varied. *The People* (10th January 1965) has a lament of the opposite kind. There has recently been a shortage of bricks and some other building materials, with the consequence that building orders are subject to long delays in delivery. The result has been a big emergence of a "black market." You can get a certain type of brick at £12 10s. a 1,000 if you can wait up to a year. But if you like to pay £20 or more you can get immediate delivery.

What we shall go on getting is the same old complaints, protests, speeches, committees of enquiry and so on. And capitalism's price system will continue to operate in the only way it can until the workers get to understand that there really is a solution, to get rid of the price system along with capitalism of which it is a part.

H.

LETTER FROM ITALY

The political situation and economic conditions in Italy were not entirely new to me when I arrived in 1963. My first move was to contact the local branches of the various parties in Trieste. I had "unofficial" discussions with the Communist Party of Italy and the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (more of these later), and can say right away that they are Socialist in name only.

My contact with workers here is limited, because political meetings are of the mass rally type and individual argument is difficult. The only activity of value was among my fellow students in the University and here I was fortunate in meeting one young fellow who became particularly interested in the Socialist case. We used to discuss heatedly in between lectures and in our free time, and he certainly kept me busy answering his objections one after the other. After a winter of argument, he was becoming very sympathetic, but my hopes of his help in forming a Socialist group in Trieste were not to be fulfilled, as I left there that summer and he was due to graduate anyway.

Travelling about Italy for a while gave me a good chance to get to know something of the Italian working class and its political movements, but before going further, it would be best to name the main parties: so here they are.

Christian Democratic Party: The party in power at the time of writing. Conservative, hand in glove with the Church. Gets about 32 per cent of the votes.

Communist Party of Italy: The major opposition party. About one third of supporters are religious (this was admitted to me by the Trieste Secretary). After the war joined by many ex-Fascists, some of whom have become M.P.'s. Despite its professed hatred of Fascism, the party has much in common with Fascist ideas and methods, e.g. violence and dictatorship. Most of its

supporters know little or nothing about Communism, or Socialism, and many of them vote C.P. more as a protest against present government policies than for any positive reason. Gets about 24 per cent of the votes.

Italian Socialist Democratic Party: A reformist party. Exalts the Scandinavian brand of "Socialism." Recently joined the Christian Democrats in a coalition, fearing a Communist majority. Gets about eight per cent of the votes.

Italian Socialist Party: Breakaway from the Communist Party in the fifties. Policy is like the weather—very changeable, sometimes supporting the communists and sometimes the Christian Democrats. Gets about six per cent of the votes.

Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity: Breakaway from the Socialist Democratic Party when the latter joined the government. Gets about 1.5 per cent of the votes.

Italian Liberal Party: Has similar policies to the Liberals in Britain, but also spends much of its time attacking the Communist Party and castigating the government for not dealing more severely with them. Gets about 10 per cent of the votes.

Italian Republican Party: Minor organisation, advocating a republic. Favours economic development, high protective tariffs, extensions of state power etc. Gets about 1.5 per cent of the votes.

Italian Social Movement: Composed of riff-raff and remnants of the old Fascist Party. Puts forward the sort of policy you hear from the Fascists in Britain and gets an alarmingly high proportion of the votes cast—about twelve per cent.

Italy is a political chaos. I am aware of about fifteen political parties, eight of which are represented in Parliament, and no less than seven claim to be Socialist. One of these, the Socialist Democratic Party (not to

be confused with No. 3 above) is a splinter from the Italian Communist party and operates in the Trieste area, supporting the actions of the Yugoslav government. Needless to say, Socialism is the last thing any of them could be accused of supporting. They are a bunch of power-thirsty careerists, struggling to get control of Montecitorio (equivalent of Westminster) to run Italian capitalism.

Like its counterparts elsewhere, Italian capitalism has been going through an economic crisis in the past year or so. The government has been forced to nationalise the privately owned section of the electricity supply and this has been followed by an increase in the price of electricity. But this has not been the only price rise. The cost of living increases substantially each year and strikes for higher wages are very frequent. At the time of writing, it is somewhat quieter but at one stage there were three or four strikes a day. And strikes in Italy are no genteel affairs.

The Italian working class are forced to struggle, but there is no evidence of any growth of socialist ideas amongst them. Anyway, more or less militancy is not a measure of Socialist knowledge and while wishing workers all power to their elbow in these fights, we should not let ourselves be dazzled by it, as Trotskyists and other political idiots are. We should not forget that even the most daring strikes are only really a struggle against the downward pressures exerted by capitalism. I was forcefully reminded of this point when reading Carlo Sforza in his *L'Italia dal 1914-1944*. He says that there were 1881 strikes registered in 1920 and 1045 in 1921. So after more than forty years it is the same old story; the struggle goes on. If nothing else, this is a telling point in favour of Socialism.

REMY STARC.

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Government and industry

On December 15 last, representatives of employers and trade unions signed a Declaration of Intent on Incomes (with Mr. George Brown, Minister of Economic Affairs. Mr. Brown proudly proclaimed the end of the class war and the co-operation of Labour and Capital for the Nation's good. A few days later, in a letter to *The Times*, he indignantly denied that the Labour government regarded "the City, Investors, Property and Industry" as their enemies.

This should not have come as a surprise. Since the 1920's, when the Labour Party first became the official Opposition, it has always declared that if elected it would govern and governing involves protecting the interests of the City, Investors, Property and Industry, in short, of the capitalist class. In office the Labour Party has done precisely this. Out of office it has acted as a responsible alternative government.

An expressive phrase of Karl Marx describes the government as the executive committee of the ruling class. The British government is, as it were, the board of directors of United Kingdom Ltd. For a "Nation" is a kind of business, a community of capitalists. On occasions the interests of the whole differ from those of the parts. It is the task of the government to see that the interests of the whole are maintained.

In Marx's time this involved little more than the keeping of law and order at home and abroad so that industry could flourish, could make profits, in peace. Later the scope of government activity expanded: it had to concern itself with economic affairs as such and not merely as a source of revenue. Today various government departments have the task of drawing up detailed balance sheets for presentation to the capitalist class, the shareholders in UK Ltd.

A vast and detailed mass of figures on trade in general, on consumption, imports and exports, prices, profits and wages and the like are collected. In addition a large part of British industry is nationalised and the government has to answer to the capitalist class for its efficient running. The government is also expected to allow a high level of economic activity to persist and to avoid, or deal with, balance of payments difficulties.

The class struggle

The capitalist class is only one of the two classes of capitalist society. The other is the working class. These two classes have no interests in common so that any party which takes on the task of governing is inevitably brought into conflict with the working class. The history of the various Labour Party governments is ample proof of this.

George Brown proclaims the end of the class struggle. Unfortunately for him, however, the class struggle is a social phenomenon which cannot be abolished by mere pronouncement or by signing scraps of paper. It has its roots in the structure of society. Capitalism is based on the monopoly over the means of production by a minority, the capitalist class. As a result the working class are forced to work for this class.

And there is a struggle over the division of the product of labour. The share of the capitalist (profit, rent, interest) can only be increased at the expense of the share of the worker (wages) and vice versa. But this is not just a price struggle which can be settled by bargaining; it is a class struggle which can only be finally ended by the expropriation of the capitalist class.

This struggle takes place whether it is recognised for what it is or not. The trade unions in Britain, though to a certain limited extent an expression of this struggle, have never recognised this. They have regarded the struggle between employers and workers as a mere price struggle. They have sometimes acted on the assumption that there is a community of interests between employers and workers. Now trade unions have become an accepted part of the capitalist order in Britain.

Respectable trade unions

It is not generally appreciated the extent to which the trade unions are today a part of the institutional framework of British capitalism. The trade unions obtained legal recognition in the period 1871-5. This status was however fairly unstable; many employers were still hostile to the very principle of trade unionism.

A series of court cases culminated in 1902 in the Taff Vale judgement, which seriously jeopardised the legality of strike action and picketing. An act of 1906 restored and improved on the previous position. The fact that trade unions were legal allowed the government to make use of responsible trade union leaders: not a few sat on Royal Commissions or became government inspectors of one sort or another.

During the first world war government-trade union co-operation grew. The attempt to continue this co-operation after the war through the joint industrial councils (Whitley councils) failed in the slump of 1920-2. Economic conditions also led to the General Strike of 1926.

The capitalist class was divided as to the legality of this strike; in any event it led to the Trades Disputes Act of 1927. The year 1928 is an important date in the evolution of respectable trade unionism in Britain. For in that year a group of employers led by Sir Alfred Mond (later Lord Melchett) approached the General Council of the TUC for discussions.

The chairman of the council at that time was Ben Turner, so that the discussions became known as the Mond-Turner Conference. It was agreed that the trade unions should be recognised as collective bargaining agents by the employers and should be encouraged by them as such. In addition employers and trade unions should insist on being consulted by the government before action on matters affecting industry.

Thus 1928 can be said to be the date that British capitalists recognised the usefulness of trade unions as collective bargaining instruments. Such bargaining is essential under capitalism and involves fairly detailed negotiations. Mond and his colleagues recognised the useful part trade unions could play in the process of wage-fixing. From this date on trade unions have been consulted on matters affecting industry and higher honours such as knighthoods have been distributed to prominent trade unionists.

Trade union-employer co-operation during the second world war followed as a matter of course. Since that war no government would dream of acting on matters concerning the TUC without prior consultation (an attempt to do so in 1948 by Sir

Stafford Cripps caused an outcry). Indeed the economic council of the TUC exists for this very purpose.

The TUC decision to appoint members to the National Economic Development Council in 1962, and the recent signature of George Brown's Declaration of Intent, are but a continuation of the process described above. Its only significance is that it represents a transition from trade union-employer co-operation to trade union-employer-government co-operation.

Government and wages

In the days when trade unions, in the employers' eyes, were disreputable organisations, the government was used as a naked class instrument. Featherstone, Llanelli, Liverpool, Belfast are places where members of the working class were killed in clashes with the armed forces called in to maintain law and order during industrial disputes. No one has been killed in such a clash since before the first world war.

Nevertheless the government is still a class instrument even if not now so obviously. Its task is to run the general affairs of British capitalism. Since 1928 trade unions have been recognised institutions and the government has found them useful. In keeping with the changed status of trade unions, official strikes have a legitimacy which, unofficial strikes have not. Of course the press are still hostile even to most official strikes and employers are still interested in getting as much as they can for as little as possible, but the role of the government has somewhat changed.

No longer are troops used to drive workers back to work in Britain. Instead, especially since the second world war, approaches have been made to trade union leaders to "moderate" their demands, to "discipline" their members and to get "capital and labour to co-operate in the nation's interest."

The second world war had a disastrous affect on the economic position of the British capitalist class. It meant that exports assumed a position more important than previously, as many overseas investments had been sold to pay for the war. All British governments since the war have had to devote much time to the balance of payments and exports.

One aspect of this has been their preoccupation with "too high" wages. Academic economists have disagreed as to whether these affect the balance of payments by increasing export prices or by encouraging imports. The various governments since the war tried many ways to solve this problem of "excessive" wages.

The post war Labour government tried "wage restraint" (1948) and a "wage freeze" (1949). The TUC agreed to co-operate in both. Despite this, the policy failed as economic forces (rising prices and labour shortage) proved stronger than government appeals and scraps of paper. The Conservative governments which followed had even less success: they couldn't even get TUC co-operation.

At first they pursued a tough line, backing employers in their resistance to wage demands. As a result they provoked a series of official strikes, for example in engineering, transport and printing. These were the first big official strikes for over twenty years. Once again the economic forces won out and the government was forced to abandon its tough policy.

In 1961 the government tried again with Selwyn Lloyd's "pay pause." This again provoked unions. Nevertheless the

TUC did agree to co-operate with the NEDC, set up in 1962. This was in keeping with the oft-repeated declaration of their general secretary that the TUC is prepared to work with any government.

George Brown's Declaration of Intent is the latest attempt to solve the problem of wages and exports for the capitalists. He has managed to get the TUC to agree to "moderate" their demands. Such an agreement runs quite contrary to the interests of the working class, but considering the position of the TUC in the economic structure of British capitalism, it is not really surprising.

As long as the membership of the trade unions are not class-conscious, it can hardly be expected that the unions themselves would act on the principle of the class struggle. Although the trade unions are not all they might be as working class organisations, this does not detract one bit from the importance of trade unionism, of working class organisation on the economic field.

But the working class, despite George Brown, should recognise that there is a class struggle, a real conflict of interest between the employing class and themselves.

A.L.B.

Public Meeting

Thursday, 11th February, 8 pm
HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL

100 DAYS OF LABOUR GOVERNMENT

Speaker: C. May

Public Meeting

Wednesday, 17th February, 7.45 pm
CONWAY HALL
Red Lion Square, WC2

SOCIALISM OR LABOUR GOVERNMENT

Speakers: H. Baldwin, J. D'Arcy

Public Meeting

Thursday, 18th March, 8 pm
CHALLENGE OF SOCIALISM
HAMPSTEAD TOWN HALL
Haverstock Hill, NW3
(opposite Belsize Park Tube)

The peace-mongers

WAR is a wearisome subject; most people seem to try to shut it out of their minds. They feel a sense of helplessness in the face of such a vast problem. With all the major powers of the world on a permanent war footing, most people fall back to the attitude—"What can we do about it?"

The vast military machines, the massive nuclear and "conventional" bases, the fleets with their unimaginable powers of destruction, all completely dwarf the individual; he feels at the mercy of powers beyond his control. Although every now and again a trigger-spot flares up in some part of the world and armed forces are more or less constantly in action, few people seem to ask why. Most of them simply accept the fictions dished out by the propaganda machine of whatever country claims their misguided loyalty.

The possibility of a major war is too frightening for them to face, so they think "let's forget it till it happens," while they hope that the smaller, local wars don't get out of hand. The fact that capitalism has created this monstrous threat has not registered on any scale. The working-class think they are unable to move, because they are not aware of any alternative.

The so-called peace movements have all failed to understand the nature of the forces against which they pit themselves. They are stuck in the rut of nationalism, just as are those to whom they appeal. None of them can see any further than capitalism, even though some of them sometimes use phrases that might give a different impression. In this country, for example, the Ex-service Movement for Peace brags of its patriotism and its members attend meetings displaying their medal-ribbons.

It is this "British and proud of it" attitude that plays straight into the hands of the capitalist class, who like to hear nothing better than their property-less wage-slaves declaring loyalty to their masters' country. While nationalist feelings prevail, it will be relatively easy for the propaganda machine to persuade workers that "if the country is good enough to live in, it is good enough to fight for." Nationalism is a big help to the ruling class in getting support for armaments and ultimately for war.

In this all-important respect, the peace mongers are their own damnation. As long as workers think in terms of "the country," it is logical for them to be prepared to defend it. Thus all the horror weapons become "necessary" in the name of "defence," because if "they have got them we have to have them." It is in this atmosphere that CND talk about Britain setting an example by abandoning her nuclear weapons. In the jungle world of capitalism the British—or any other—ruling class are not so naive as to fall for that one.

No ruling class is willingly going to "set any example" which would mean saying—"these are our oil-fields, markets and vested interests, but you, our rivals, can move in at will because we have no military might to support our claims." It only has to be put like that to show how futile the peace movements are.

The present owners of the oil-fields, the land, investments etc., only came by them through robbery, plunder and force of arms. They realise that what they took by force can only be held by force; no national capitalist class is going to contract out of the rat-race in order to make way for their rivals. And if one ruling group did contract out, their loot would soon be snatched by whoever got in first and was militarily strong enough to hold it. Nothing basic would be changed. There would be one rival less and those remaining would be a little fatter.

To those people who innocently go around seeking to "ban the bomb" or to remove some other immediate outrage, it seems quite irrelevant to talk about private property in the means of production. They see the end product of it all, the Bomb, but the social relationships and the historically developed conditions from which the Bomb arose entirely escape their attention. Yet it is futile to attempt to deal with the end product while ignoring the process of its production.

The apathy and despair of millions of workers follows on the blind and emotional activities of organisations like CND, which have masses of terrifying data on the Bomb, but know of no way of dealing with it.

In any case, there are still plenty of people being killed by those old fashioned, "conventional," weapons the rifle, the hand-grenade, or the bayonet. They are just as dead as if they were killed by any other means, and as far as they were concerned there was nothing at stake to justify their deaths.

The capitalist classes of the major power blocs maintain their military machines for the purpose of protecting or expanding their spheres of profitable influence, nationally and internationally. This minority of people own the factories, the land and all those assets which go to make up the country. At the same time that the majority of people—the working-class—own nothing to fight about. Workers in all parts of the world have a common interest to get rid of the social system which condemns them to exploitation. They cannot do this in ignorance; they must realise what capitalism means and how to change it.

Chasing after bombs or some other pressing effect of capitalism, only helps to retain the system that has produced these things. When a political challenge is made by INDEC, the overwhelming majority of their own supporters still vote for Capitalism under the Labourites or the Tories. Despite the mass following of CND, their political effort can only be described as feeble. These are the people who were going places, who could not wait for the day when there would be a majority of Socialists. It was the old familiar cry of "something now," which results in nothing never. Disillusionment and disintegration is all that awaits such movements.

HB

To the Princes of the Church

You prate of love and murmur of goodwill,
Turn sanctimonious eyes toward your God,
Write on your walls the text "Thou shalt not kill,
Point out the path your "Prince of Peace" once trod,
While all the time, with murder in your hearts,
You lie, cajole, and bully that the fools who heed your words may play their foolish parts,
As slaves of Mammon, as was Lord's tools.
On Many a field, in many a river bed,
Of Flanders and of Poland and of France,
Your bloody-minded words bear fruit indeed.
Preachers of Death! the thought of maimed and dead
Will nerve us when our hosts of Life advance
To crush for ever your accursed breed.

F. J. WEBB.

(From the *Socialist Standard* Feb. 1915.)

THE NEWS IN REVIEW

Cunarder on the Clyde

Both the *Queen Mary* and the *Queen Elizabeth* were built in the Clydeside shipyard of John Brown.

When it was confirmed, on the eve of Hogmanay, that the same shipyard had won the contract to make the replacement for the *Queen Mary*, both God and Commercial Television celebrated.

Church bells rang out in the Clydebank parish of Kilbowie. Scottish Television took huge press adverts, which crowed that the right yard had won the contract. Perhaps they are hoping that their blatant appeal to ignorance and patriotism will persuade some of the five thousand who will be employed on the new Cunarder to spend some of their wages on television sets.

No bells rang on the Tyne and in Belfast, homes of the other two firms competing for the contract. Swan, Hunter, Vickers-Armstrong and Harland and Wolff are probably hoping that John Brown's preoccupation with the new Cunarder over the next three years or so will leave a more open market for them.

But this is by no means certain, British ship-building is still struggling, pushed hard by the Japanese and the Swedes and some Continental yards. The Cunard affair underlines the fact that in such competition there can be only one winner. There could be gloomy times ahead for the shipyard workers in Belfast and on Tyneside. Perhaps Scottish Television will make a small donation to their soup kitchens.

The profitability of the new Cunarder is doubtful. More and more people are crossing the Atlantic by air, and fewer and fewer by sea. The shipping lines have largely given up the struggle to compete in cheap travel, and now concentrate on selling the sea voyage as a more gracious and rejuvenating way of travelling than a clamorous jet flight.

The new liner is designed to accept these conditions. It will be a flexible ship, with accommodation which can be rearranged into two classes and a draught shallow enough to permit cruising, if this seems more profitable. Meanwhile the ageing *Queens* have to face competition from more modern, faster ships; next year Sweden and Italy enter the race.

This uncertain world, into which the new liner will be launched, does not resemble the leisured and gracious image which Cunard once built for themselves.

The reality of capitalism is grim, and never grimmer than when a proud example of craftsmanship and ingenuity is pushed out into the rough seas of commercial anarchy.

Agin' the Guinea

Next month, at Largs in Scotland, the Labour women will hold their annual national conference.

There they will discuss the customary sheaf of meaningless and hypocritical resolutions.

Consider, for example, the motion which condemns the practice of pricing goods in guineas and which calls on the government to abolish the guinea system.

On the face of it, this may seem a genuine expression of a desire to protect the consumer interests of the working class. But let us look at it a little deeper.

We are all familiar with the ruse of pricing in guineas. Perhaps some people are actually taken in by it, and think that a suit costing fifteen guineas is no more expensive than one costing fifteen pounds.

But such people are obviously beyond the help of pious resolutions. They would be just as easily deceived by another, equally transparent, trick if the Labour women got their way over the guinea.

So what will the conference be worrying about? Do the Labour women think that abolishing the guinea will do something to stop prices rising? Are they looking for an excuse for their government's failure to keep that part of their election programme?

Let us get down to basic facts. The Labour Party supports capitalism, which is a system of production of goods for sale and therefore a system in which there are buyers and sellers and prices at which they buy and sell.

The interests of buyer and seller are directly opposed. One wants the price to be as low as possible, the other wants it as high as possible. These opposing interests are mostly asserted in ways which are within capitalism's laws.

Sometimes they are asserted by illegal methods. And sometimes they are asserted by methods which, while not illegal, are not exactly honest. These methods include monopoly control and such diddles as pricing something worth half a crown at two shillings elevenpence halfpenny and the use of guineas instead of pounds.

Whatever method is used, it must be

the forces of the market which finally control the fluctuations of a price, however it is expressed. All of this is very proper and necessary to capitalism, even if it sometimes means that prices rise sharply, or come crashing down in a slump.

Sly ruses, by buyer or seller, have no effect upon that. They are only a part of capitalism's competitive scramble. Individual members of the Labour Party may not like some of the effects of the scramble, but they ardently support the social system which produces it.

It is that basic issue, and nothing else, that they should be discussing at Largs.

Prices: up, up, up

"We was robbed!" has always been a favourite complaint of the Labour Party when contemplating the frustrations and the failures of their governments.

In 1931, they said they were beaten by a Bankers' Ramp. After the war it was the unmanageable dollar gap. Last November the Gnomes of Zurich were said to be busily undermining the finances of Labour Britain. Now the grocers are on the rampage.

Rising prices are proving to be one of the government's big problems, especially in the grocery trade, where items like frozen foods, biscuits and sausages have recently gone up. This is not the end of it: during four weeks spanning the turn of the year, nearly one thousand retail prices were increased.

All of this makes Labour's promises in their election programme, *New Britain*, to introduce "... new and more relevant policies to check the persistent rise in prices" look pretty sick. So the old squeal—"We was robbed!" can be heard again.

This time it is Mr. Frank Cousins, at one of his Huneaton by-election meetings, who squealed:

The 15 per cent surcharge does not apply to foodstuffs, so there is no excuse there (for price increases) ... to pretend that an extra 6d on fuel justifies an extra 1d or 2d on a particular tin, packet, or bottle ... is just plain nonsense.

Now what does this amount to? Mr. Cousins also complained: "... some of the firms ... are already making record profits." What that means is that the Labour government are being given the run-around by the grocers; it means that they cannot control the mechanisms of

capitalist society.

In the same way, if we accept the excuse that there was a Bankers' Ramp in 1931, it follows that Labour could not control the international financiers. On the same argument the Attlee government could not control its financial crises and now Mr. Wilson's lot cannot control its own retailers.

But the Labour party, like every other capitalist party, has always claimed that they can control capitalism. Hence their optimistic election talk of plans, control, priorities, all of which evaporates in face of reality.

The reality of prices is that they do not depend on the level of import duty and taxes. In the short run, the fluctuations of a price are governed by the forces of supply and demand, which means that the seller will charge as much as the market allows.

This is exactly what the grocery trade is doing, and what Mr. Cousins is complaining about. But nobody who supports capitalism can complain when the system takes its logical course.

Mr. Cousins cannot complain and the Labour government cannot complain. Neither can the millions of people who put them into power.

African turmoil

"Malawi," said Dr. Hastings Banda recently, "is at war." He is not the first of the leaders of the new States on the African continent to make such a declaration.

Egypt, we have been told, is at war. So is Zambia. Nigeria and the Congo are immersed in internal conflicts of varying intensity. And so on.

There have been, of course, no formal declarations of war. But that is not what Dr. Banda and his counterparts mean when they use the word.

The new states are struggling to establish themselves against pressures both external and internal. One of their governments' problems is to break down the old tribal allegiances and substitute a wider ranging patriotism.

Africans who once thought of themselves as belonging to this or that tribe, under this or that chief, must now be persuaded that it is better to belong to a developing capitalist nation, under this or that leader—or dictator.

And how is this achieved? The techniques are wearily familiar. There are

the patriotic declarations, the empty mysticism over the new flag, the dark warnings of impending danger from outside, the calls to arms. There is also the synthetic worship of the new nation's leader—the personality cults of men like Nkrumah and Banda.

Part of this process is the "discovery" of alleged plots against the security of the state. Dr. Banda said that his former Foreign Minister, Mr. Chiume, is combining with the Zanzibar rebel Mr. Okello in a scheme to invade Malawi. Neighbouring Zambia is to spend £7 million on "defence and internal security," double its border posts and step up its naval forces on the boundary rivers and lakes.

Dr. Banda appealed to the Malawi people to arrest any strangers and report them to the Congress Party; "Investigate

every strange face," he said.

This is like a small-scale re-enactment of Europe in the Thirties. It is also reminiscent of the spy-scares which helped to keep war fever up to pitch during the two world wars.

But the African nationalists always claimed, when they were struggling for power, that they would be above the tricks and subterfuges of the old colonialist powers.

There need be no surprise that they have turned out to be different. Tricks and lies are always used in the fights between capitalist powers. As the new, African states enter these fights, it is inevitable that they should use the time honoured methods.

Perhaps Dr. Banda is right; perhaps Malawi is at war, for in war the first casualty has always been the truth.

CORRESPONDENCE

FRIENDLY CRITICISM FROM HOLLAND

There are no objections on my part to the aims of the S.P.G.B. as laid down in your Declaration of Principles; my difficulty concerns the contradiction there is between some of those principles, whose values are being defended and advocated in your party's literature, and the fact that your party contests in the general election for exclusive political power, with the only possible result of one day being sent to the Houses of Parliament. There they would either share the responsibilities of that "time-honoured" institution or, in the case of your party's representatives not yielding to the temptations carried along with these responsibilities, they would not be allowed to enter, on the grounds that they want to change the *status quo*. And rightly so, since Parliament, as indeed all institutions, are only there for the purpose of maintaining the order of things as they are, allowing minor reforms only so as to adapt the system to newly arisen situations, and by doing so keep the control in the hands of the ruling class. All that might change is the composition of the privileged few.

However, these are mere side-reflections. The arguments against parliamentary action are based on a Marxist analysis of the present-day class struggle.

In the past the antagonisms of the capitalist way of organising the means of production called up such appalling conditions that universal suffrage and its consequence—parliamentary reform—became the means of the working class improving their general conditions. It is a different picture today. Now the workers sharply distinguish between bringing out their vote for a particular party and fighting the class struggle. The former they do according to their political notions, the latter as a result of their

being exploited. The latter is more interesting because it concerns the whole class. Since the trade-unions, and their political extensions the social democratic parties, have integrated in modern capitalism, the workers have had to fight them as much as the traditional institutions. Their memory of the days when they fought side by side with union leaders and social democrats for improvements, leads them as yet to believe that corruption is the cause; other, more active and radical men must take the place of the capitalist stooges!

In true fact it is not, of course, the corruption of the leaders which has caused the at-one-time working class organisations to turn into a boomerang, but the vested interests these organisations have in the existing order.

Born from social conditions that no longer prevail, they have grown into mighty organisations with the task of maintaining and expanding their rule over the working class. Pre-eminently they are the exponents of State-Capitalism and as time goes on they will more and more prove to be far more ruthless than any established institution so far.

I have tried to show that reformism has not come about because various political parties lacked, or lack, firmness of principles but because their very form and nature belong to State-Capitalism. At a rapid speed they are swallowing the old private capitalist, for whom no one needs to feel sorry, leaving themselves as the sole rulers of the world. Contrary to the more backward countries, Western Europe and the United States were in no need of a revolution to bring to power the new class of bureaucrats—the joint stock company of intellectuals, professionals and the most

dangerous of all the managers—they had already attained sufficient power within private capitalism that a smooth take-over seems preferable with a view to the danger of rousing too much enthusiasm on the side of the working class!

If then political parties, trade unions and other bodies of professional rulers are a sign, a token of class-rule, we must try to find out what forces there are that oppose all of them equally vigorously.

This leads us to the working class themselves. They bear in themselves the means to organise socialism, they are numerous and all of them are engaged in producing the wealth of the world, and last but not least: they possess an enormous storehouse of hardly touched creative drive.

As yet the working class hesitate. Their actions are universally denounced as avaricious, subversive, unlawful and even anti-socialist. Their enemies are stronger than ever before, much better organised and have at their disposal an unequalled propaganda apparatus. Those who are conscious of what is taking place; who, stirred by the abysmal wretchedness of the working class all over the world and of all people in general, have come to the conclusion that there is one remedy only: Socialism. And nothing less will do.

The SPGB stand for Socialism. Why should it uphold and advocate the idea that the working class can vote for socialism, while at the same time telling them that it's their task to *build it*? Moreover it supports the prevalent view as it is of the possibility to shun their responsibilities, with the effect that they keep on voting for the Labour party on the argument that it is bigger and more powerful!

Amsterdam

JOS VAN OERNS.

We have had to make some minor alterations to this letter, but only to cut out what Mr. van Oerns called "any errors of style and usage." The sense of the letter remains completely unchanged.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

Reply

First of all, we take it we are agreed on the aim: Socialism, a system of society in which all have free access to the means of production, a self-controlling world community in which the principle "from each according to his ability to each according to his needs" prevails.

The question, then, is how to achieve this aim.

(1) Who is to implement it? A study of present-day society reveals that the class in whose interest it is to establish Socialism is the working class. This class, brought into being and trained by capitalism, now runs industry from top to bottom. It has no need of the superfluous owning class which lives off its unpaid labour. At present, however, the working class does not realise this. The present task of the SPGB is to help them to come to such an understanding.

(2) What grounds have we for assuming that such understanding is possible? According to the materialist conception of history the basic social relations are those of property, ultimately dependent on the development of technology. They give rise to classes and to class conflict. Social change comes about in the following way: a change in technology changes the mode of production and shifts the centre of industrial control, causing a new class to come to prominence. At first the struggle of this new class against the institutions and values of the old order will be purely an economic one. Later, as the new class becomes conscious of itself it will begin to organise itself politically. This organisation will be completed when the class achieves *political power*. The class conflicts generated by the economic structure of society always ultimately become political, i.e. conscious class, conflicts. The prize in all the class conflicts in history has always been, in the end, political power. This is the thesis of the materialist conception of history.

(3) Is this analysis applicable to present-day society? Certainly. The development of technology which was the Industrial Revolution and what has followed ever since has developed a new class. The economically important class today is the working class. The property relations of capitalist society give rise to a conflict between this class and the privileged owning class. Up till now this *class struggle* has been unconscious and purely economic. The working class have been forced to organise in trade unions to use in the struggle over the division of the product of their labour. Insofar as they are used for this purpose these trade unions have the support of the SPGB. (Your comments seem to suggest that trade unions are wholly anti-working class organisations. In our view this is a dangerous oversimplification.) (4) What of the future? Trade union action, the economic phase of the class struggle, precisely because of its unconscious nature, has its limitations. The history of class societies shows that the economic actions of any rising class have had a defensive character. To win they have had to organise *consciously and politically*. The same applies to the working class today. If they are to win, they must wage the class struggle *consciously*. This involves organising as a political party with a view to capturing political power. This is the case of the SPGB for political action.

(5) This view is based on a study of history and in particular of the role of the State, the seat of political power and the centre of social control. In the advanced capitalist countries, in order to ensure the smooth functioning of their system, in order to avoid interruptions of work by political conditions, the capitalist class have been forced (or, in some cases, found it convenient) to institute peaceful ways of sounding opinion and settling disputes. Disputes have been institutionalized in the voting and, for want of a better word, parliamentary system. It is our view that it is possible for the working class to use these institutions to

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settle their class struggle with the owning class. *The vote is thus a potential class weapon.* But the vote, like other weapons, can be used properly or improperly. Because at present the workers use it to elect demagogues and careerists of one kind or another is no argument against its potentialities.

(6) As far as we are concerned, what is important is not so much the vote as the understanding behind it. Thus, when we contest elections we do all we can to make sure that only convinced Socialists vote for us. A vote won on other grounds is worse than useless as the history of the Social Democrats of Europe has shown. The vote is just a possible means to political power—the

goal of a class conscious working class.

(7) Clearly then our conception of political action differs from that of other parties and the reformists in particular. They perform any tricks and engage in all kinds of demagoguery in order to get elected. Without a Socialist working class behind them, what can they do? Nothing save maintain the *status quo*. Hence the phenomena of "sell-out" and "betrayal." It is completely irrelevant to judge the usefulness of political action on how the reformists have used it, not least because they operate on a different assumption, namely, that you can substantially improve the lot of the working class without Socialist understanding. When delegates of the SPGB are sent to the centre of political

power they will be the delegates of the working class because the SPGB will be the working class organised consciously and politically.

(8) The point is that we are not a political party in the conventional sense of the term, we are not a group of politicians trying to get elected to do something for the working class, to pass a Socialism in Great Britain Act and legislate the new society into being. Far from it, in our view a Socialist party should not be a vanguard but an instrument. We conceive ourselves as an instrument which the working class can use to achieve political power, a necessary prerequisite for the establishment of Socialism.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

WHAT IS POLITICS

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS by Dorothy M. Pickles.
Methuen, University Paperbacks, 9s 6d.

"I am not interested in politics," is a statement that is made with monotonous regularity, usually by people who sincerely imagine that politics are something existing outside of society. They regard politics as a kind of superstructure built up around the realities of government, which can be ignored while they deal with the important things of life, such as the day-to-day problems of existence.

Problems are of course one of the few

things that workers are never short of. At the time of the last General Election, a member of a much publicised quartet stated that the "Election was nonsense," a gem of wisdom that was given full publicity in the press. Somebody had probably told him that he was a philosopher.

But the important point is, that such a remark must have been acceptable to many of his admirers, otherwise the publicity boys would have quietly stifled it. Needless to say the General Election wasn't nonsense to the capitalist class, who were once again confirmed by it in their position in society.

Developing from this idea come further statements such as, "Politics are a dirty game," and "Politicians are in it for what they can get." Politics and Politicians often are dirty, but in modern society no politician stays long in power unless he has the backing of the electorate, in other words politician's reflect the society that places them in power.

One of the dangerous results of these attitudes is the belief that politics can be dispensed with by electing a non-politician, such as a famous soldier, to power. The fact that the soldier, upon election, behaves like all the others, is usually lost on the people who elected him. Totalitarian parties will always claim that a one-party state is above politics, and the promise that they will clean up the state machinery, is always one of their main arguments.

The truth is that any action to control

any society, whether primitive or complex, is political and if people refuse to take political action which is in their own interest, others are only too willing to fill the gap, and run society in their own way.

Introduction to Politics by Dorothy M. Pickles, the latest of the very useful series of University Paperbacks, begins:

The practice of politics is necessarily as old as society itself. Wherever men live in a community, they must accept certain rules of conduct, if only to safeguard the existence of the community itself.

and later;

The study of politics, which is sometimes called political science, is born when men begin to speculate about the rules by which they are governed, or by which their ancestors were governed, when they begin to ask whether these rules ought to be accepted, or ought to have been accepted in the past, why some societies chose different rules from others, or whether it is possible to discover general rules of conduct which could or should be applicable to all societies.

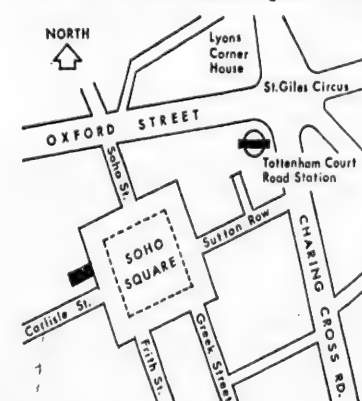
Mrs. Pickles traces the development of political organisation from its primitive beginnings in "... a few traditions handed down orally from one generation to another to the whole complex set of constitutional and governmental regulations of the modern state."

This is a book which contains much useful information, and many controversial statements, and which is well worth the effort of reading.

L. DALE.

MEETINGS

BLOOMSBURY LECTURES
Asquith Room, 2 Soho Sq. W1
Sundays, 8 pm (doors open 7.30 pm)



7th February
LABOUR'S FIRST 100 DAYS
Speaker: R. Macdowell

14th February
THE IMMIGRATION QUESTION
Speaker: A. Buick

21st February
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY
Speaker: J. Law

28th February
THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY
Speaker: G. MacLatchie

7th March
COMMUNICATIONS
Speaker: L. Dale

GLASGOW PUBLIC MEETINGS
Woodside Public Halls
Sundays, 7.30 pm

"THE BRITISH SCENE"

7th February
PARLIAMENT—POWER HOUSE OR GAS HOUSE
Speaker: R. Donnelly

14th February
WHY CND FAILED
Speaker: V. Vanni

21st February
MONARCHY—ITS RISE AND FALL
Speaker: A. Webster

28th February
THE FUTILITY OF THE LEFT WING
Speaker: J. Richmond

WEST LONDON
Westcott Lodge, Hammersmith
Lower Mall (facing river)
Friday, 5th February, 8 pm
FILM AND LECTURE
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY AND POWER IN EUROPE

NOTTINGHAM MEETINGS
First Sunday in each month
Co-op Centre, Heathcoat Street
Sundays, 7.30 pm

7th February
WAGES
Speaker: R. Cook

7th March
SOCIALISM & NATIONALISM
Speaker: E. Grant

STEVENAGE MEETINGS
54 Sish Lane
Monday, 8 pm

8th February
USE VALUE AND VALUE
Speaker: J. McGuiness

22nd February
SOCIALISM OR CHAOS
Speaker: H. Baldwin

WELWYN MEETING
Community Centre
Thursday, 25th February, 8 pm
POVERTY OF "AFFLUENCE"
Speaker: H. Waite

OXFORD MEETINGS
Clarendon Press Institute
Walton Street, Oxford
Fridays, 8 pm

12th February
THE TRADE UNION QUESTION
Speaker: L. Cox

5th March
THE SOCIAL QUESTION
Speaker: D. Donaldson

CAMBERWELL MEETINGS
52 Clapham High Street, SW4
Mondays, 8 pm

8th February
STRIKES AND UNIONS
Speaker: H. Baldwin

22nd February
Tape Recording:
DEBATE
HACKNEY YOUNG SOCIALISTS V SPGB
For SPGB: E. Grant

LEWISHAM MEETINGS
Co-op Hall, Davenport Road
Rushey Green, Catford, SE6
Mondays, 8 pm

8th February
THE POVERTY OF AFFLUENCE
Speaker: P. Laurence

22nd February
CRIME IN CAPITALIST SOCIETY
Speaker: H. Baldwin

PADDINGTON
The Royal Oak, York St., W1
(near Marylebone Station)
Wednesdays, 9 pm

3rd February
A VIEW OF THE CITY
Speaker: N. Stovold

10th February
OIL
Speaker: W. Waters

3rd March
GEORGE ORWELL
Speaker: D. Donaldson

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays
Hyde Park, 3 pm
East Street, Walworth
February 7th (1 pm)
February 14th & 28th (noon)
February 21st (11 am)

Mondays
Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Thursdays
Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm

GLASGOW CLASSES
Branch Rooms, 163a Berkeley St.
Wednesdays, 8 pm

TUTOR: R. RUSSELL

5th February
MONEY—INFLATION

12th February
THE EXPLOITATION MACHINE

19th February
RENT, INTEREST & PROFIT

26th February
THE MONEY MARKET

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THE PASSING SHOW

Stolen holiday

How dare you take an extra day off work at Christmas! How *DARE* you!

Is this the way to beat our foreign competitors and make Britain great again? Well, is it? You ought to be *ASHAMED* of yourselves. Here we are in the middle of an economic crisis. Exports are down and costs are up. The trade gap is wider and the pound narrower. But what do you care? Absolutely nothing—and to prove it you took Monday December 28th as an extra holiday.

The *Daily Mail* of the following day threw a purple-faced screaming headline at its readers. Did you know that you had had a *stolen* holiday? That is what the *Mail* called it, because Wilson's government refused to declare it a public one but many firms granted it just the same. And those awful dock-workers actually *took* it without so much as a by-your-leave. This, at a time when industry in rival countries was allegedly working normally. "Not exactly the Dunkirk Spirit" moaned the *Mail*.

It's a moot point whether British workers are more or less diligent than those elsewhere, and not one which is really worth much either way. West German workers, for example, get more holidays than British and West Germany is one of Britain's major European competitors. After all, one day's work more or less is not likely to make such a tremendous difference to the fortunes of the British Capitalist class, but the *Mail* is probably concerned least the habit should become more popular and frequent, and aims to knock it hard on the head before this gets a chance to happen.

It's nothing new for workers to be called lazy. My own memory is long enough to recall the insults of the pre-war labour exchanges with their puffed-up little clerks, themselves dead scared of putting a foot wrong and landing in the queue on the other side of the counter. During and since the war things have changed, superficially anyway, but we still have to endure goading with stick or carrot from press and politicians alike. Of course, the *Mail* and the Labour Government would like to see a return to the "Dunkirk Spirit"—its self-denial and if need be, heroism, in the task of keeping British capitalism on the map. Do you remember the days of Dunkirk, incidentally? The futile bloodshed and misery, the long tedious hours of war work and short rations?

Dunkirk and 1940 have a nostalgic ring for capitalist politicians. In those days there was always the promise (the carrot) of a better world after the war, of course, and twenty years of post war experience have tarnished the image a bit. But never mind, if only they could recapture *some* of the spirit, how much easier would life be for them. Costs would be kept down as foolish workers cheerfully sacrificed their wage increases. Profit margins would widen and perhaps more markets be captured. All very desirable for the owners of industry but hardly an exciting prospect for the working class. Now perhaps you can see why we are not very impressed by the promises or threats that are made from time to time to try and get a bit more out of us.

About the same time as the *Mail* was working itself into such a rage over our laziness, The Duke of Edinburgh and his son were off for a week or two of winter sports. In February he will visit Australia for a week. Princess Margaret and

husband went over to Ireland for a bit of a holiday. Perhaps if we scanned the society columns we could find plenty of other rich people doing the same sort of thing.

Quite clearly the Royal Family and the rest do not take the *Mail's* strictures very seriously and in any case they were not aimed in their direction. For they belong to the ten per cent who do not have to sell themselves for a wage packet to make a living, and who live a life of perpetual ease and comfort. The rest of us do all the work and have a pretty drab time of it. Just think about that before you get too conscience-stricken over your Christmas break.

The ultimate stunt

Let's face it. There are some of us who have never been daring or mildly athletic. A jump from the top board of the local swimming baths would be a real trial of courage for many, including me. Even our childhood pranks can only be called slightly audacious, quite harmless in themselves and never very exciting.

To get to the point. This is perhaps the age of the stunt man, highly trained and physically fit, whose job it is to keep giving his audience bigger and better thrills. He is in great demand for the stand-in feats of riding, fighting and falling that enthrall you on the silver screen, and keep the big (and expensive) stars in one piece. He must have nerves of steel and a lion's courage, and early on he has to face the possibility of serious injury or sudden and violent death.

Like the rest of us, the stunt man lives in a highly commercial world, and although he may be comparatively well paid, he has to make his living under particularly difficult and trying conditions. And being a commercial world, it subjects him to its rules and regulations and the same sorts of pressures as other workers. In practical terms, this means that he must never really relax. His eyes must always be open for new feats ("gimmicks" would be a less generous term) to maintain his audiences' interest and keep his labour power in demand. And just as in other fields demanding intense concentration and devotion, the job can become a pretty unhealthy obsession.

Did you read about the Hollywood stunt man Rod Pack in the *Daily Mail* of January 8th? His escapade made Blondin and his barrel look like child's play. He had been doing a lot of skydiving—parachute jumping to you—which you might think dangerous enough. But not Mr. Pack. He heard a writer's joking suggestion about trying a jump without a 'chute. "It became an obsession," he confessed and with the not entirely disinterested assistance of some enterprising T.V. producer who offered him a contract, he managed to pull it off. He is still alive to tell the tale.

Granting Mr. Pack's courage, what has been the result of his feat? A lot of worry for his wife and friends, a rake-off for the T.V. producer and some exclusive pictures for the *Daily Mail*. "Just for the hell of it, just to be first" was his reason, and as far as he was concerned, that was the end of it. But we can be sure there will be others to follow him, risking life and limb in perhaps even more foolhardy and dangerous stunts to satisfy the demands of the entertainments market. It will prove precious little and solve no outstanding social problems. A tragic waste, really, of human skill and strength, but then that is a fitting description of capitalism as a whole.

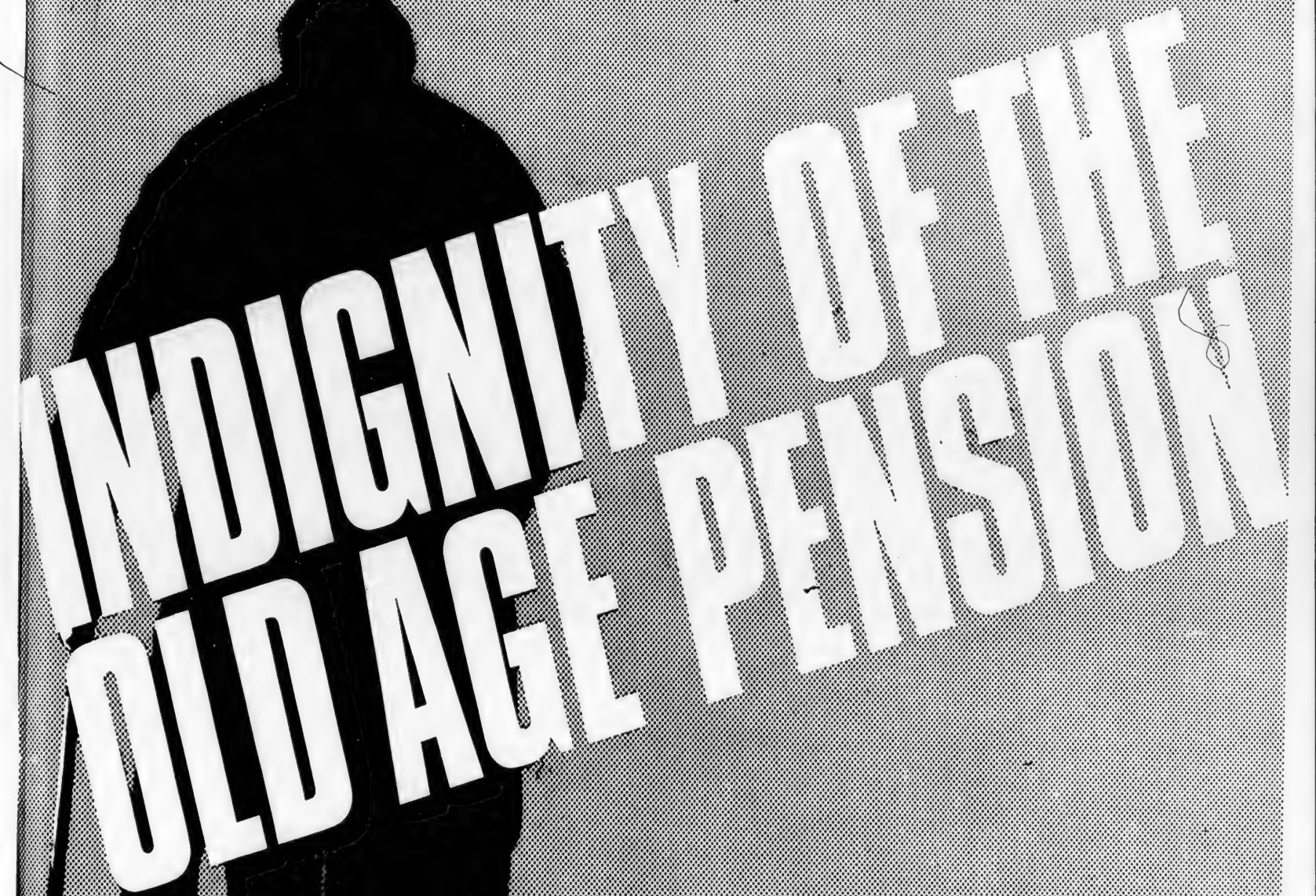
ETC.

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INDIGNITY OF THE OLD AGE PENSION

CRISIS IN THE
AIRCRAFT
INDUSTRY

WILLIAM MORRIS
AS A SOCIALIST

SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY Thursdays 8 pm, 4th and 18th Mar. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

BRADFORD & DISTRICT Correspondence: SPGB, Head Office, 52 Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 5th Mar. at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath (Tel. BEX 1950) and 19th Mar. at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham, SE9 (Tel: KIP 1796). Correspondence: W. G. Calt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 20 Clyde Street, Clydebank.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 7.30 pm, Bethnal Green Town Hall (Room 3, Patriot Square entrance). Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Neslon, above address.

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

MID HERTS Regular meetings at Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage. For details see meetings, and write: Ken Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. (Phone Hatfield 4802).

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

ARMAGH Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 20 Druids Villas, Armagh City, Co. Armagh.

NOTTINGHAM 2nd Wednesday in month (10th Mar.) 8 pm, Peoples Hall, Heathcoat Street. Correspondence: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARLBORNE Wednesdays 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marlborough Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Thursdays (4th and 18th Mar.) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm, Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-sea.

SWANSEA 1st and 3rd Monday (1st and 15th Mar.) in month 8 pm, 68 Bryn Road (bottom - flat). Correspondence to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowod, Llangyfelach, Swansea.

WEMBLEY Mondays 8 pm, Barham Old Court, Barham Park, near Sudbury Town Station, Wembley. Correspondence: R. G. Cain, 35 Waltham Rd., Southall, Middx.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (11th and 25th Mar.) in month 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (12th and 26th Mar.) in month 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Enquiries: M. Hopwood, St. Martins Rd., Ashton on Mersey, Sale. Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

REDHILL Enquiries: A. A. Kemp, 19 Ashcombe Road, Mersham, Redhill, Surrey.

SUNDERLAND Details of meetings from P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newton Avenue, Belfast 15.

LISBURN Discussion group meets regularly. Details from B. McCloskey c/o Head Office.

PORTRADOWN & DISTRICT Would persons interested in the formation of a discussion group contact group secretary c/o 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

visitors are cordially invited to every meeting

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

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Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



Crisis in the aircraft industry

The aircraft industry is giving British capitalism perhaps its biggest headache for a long time. Once was when it enjoyed a leading reputation, both in the civil and military spheres, but over the past few years it has been hit by a series of crises. In a severely competitive market the gap has been rapidly narrowed until today it faces the threat of almost total eclipse by its American rivals.

This fact, accepted by government and opposition alike, stood out starkly in the Commons debate on February 9th. It was matched in its starkness only by the government's avowed intention to cut its already heavy losses, pare the industry down by several thousand workers, and divert skilled manpower to other and more profitable ventures, particularly in the export field. "We are determined not to leave skilled labour lying idle," said Aviation Minister Jenkins during the debate, although only time will tell just how far this intention is realised.

The present structure of the aircraft industry is something which was largely imposed on it by the capitalist class as a whole. Large amalgamations were pushed through at the behest of previous governments in return for a guarantee of a certain amount of support and protection. Whatever the intentions were, however, it seems they did not prevent the industry floundering, and the days are gone when our rulers are prepared to throw more large sums of good money after bad. There will be a link-up with France, Holland and U.S.A. in the development of future projects, obviously a cost-saving move among other things.

As usual in any upheaval of this kind, workers are the ones to suffer, and already thousands of redundancies have been declared. Men who entered the industry as youngsters, when it was the up-and-coming thing, are having to face the prospect of retraining for other employment, with the possibility of lower wages and conditions. Most of them have been engaged on military aircraft of one sort or another, and it is one of the bitter ironies of the situation to see them demonstrating in favour of these instruments of death and destruction in a quite understandable attempt to save their jobs. Clearly, one worker's livelihood is another one's obliteration—one more example how capitalism pits workers remorselessly against their brothers elsewhere.

But protest as they may, there was no sign that the government would relent. After all, the capitalist class is not in business for the benefit of its workers, and if better value for money can be had by pulling out of one industry and investing in another, then this is what will be done, unemployment or no unemployment. "Value for money," was a battle cry of the Labour Party for some time before their recent return to power, and there is every sign that they will be just as ruthless as anyone else in their effort to attain it. Already they have said that the firm of Short Bros. must go, and future contracts with other companies may carry much stiffer "fixed price" provisions—something which will give employers an added incentive to resist wage claims.

An interesting comment on the essential similarity in the ideas of all capitalist parties was given on February 10th by the Hawker Siddeley chairman Sir Roy Dobson. In a slashing attack on the Tory party, he said they "would have liked to have done" what the Labour government was now doing, but instead "just waffled" when they were in power. But apart from this anyway, the Commons debate was notable for the closeness of views on both sides. And not one whisper of dissent was heard when Mr. Jenkins uttered a cardinal fact of capitalist life:—"We can afford to make products only if others buy them." This is what is really behind the wrangles over the aircraft industry today, the textiles industry yesterday, and who knows what tomorrow. And workers will always get hurt in the process, for capitalism is a very hurtful system.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4, at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

After Leyton, What?

THE Leyton by-election has passed into political history, and for a long time to come will be one of the psephologists' favourite test-tubes.

It was also the psephologists' nightmare, disproving all their predictions and setting the opinion polls to searching for what went wrong. This is all strongly reminiscent of the Truman victory in the United States in 1948. None of the pollsters cared to recall, after Leyton, that in 1948 they said they had found a hidden defect in their systems, that they had eliminated it and that such mistakes would not happen again.

In fact, there were signs before the votes were cast that things were not going too well for Mr. Gordon Walker. The Wilson government had not produced the promised rabbits out of the expected hats. The pensioners were annoyed about having to wait for their rise, the mortgagees were furious that their rise—in the interest rates—came upon them so quickly. On 20th. January, *The Guardian's* reporter noticed "... a remarkably consistent switch away from Labour. It would not be sufficient to upset the Foreign Secretary's anticipated election ... but (it) would reduce his majority considerably."

As it turned out, that was an understatement. Leyton confirmed a trend which has been developing for some time now—the trend towards an electoral mood more volatile than that which, for years after the war, stolidly returned "no change" verdicts in by-election after by-election. Orpington Man, now old and well established, has been followed by the perhaps more menacing figure of Leyton Man.

Along with the psephologists, the Labour Party are also looking for what went wrong. In a letter to *The Observer*, Lord Sorensen made it clear that he thought the defeat was caused by what he called "unworthy abstentions." Having been kicked upstairs so that Mr. Gordon Walker could lose his seat, Lord Sorensen obviously feels the defeat especially strongly. But during the election, the Labour Party were content to accept what they presumed would be a favourable result: "I will consider the result a verdict on the Government and on the Opposition's performance to date." (Mr. Gordon Walker, at Leyton, 14th. January.) Well, the verdict is plain; even the verdict of those who voted by staying away from the polling booths. The Labour government has not been able to inspire its supporters to turn out to vote for it, which says very little for their talk, during the general election, of action and progress and urgency.

Lord Sorensen did not confine his strictures to abstainers: "... the deliberate denigration of Gordon Walker ... demonstrates how far we have to go to ensure that electors vote on principles and policies rather than being swayed by extraneous secondary matters."

Two things are apparent from this statement. The first is that Lord Sorensen is complaining about votes which lost his party a seat; if the election had gone the other way, he would have been full of praise for the voters' sanity and principles. The second point, which follows from the first, is that what Lord Sorensen means by "voting on principles" is, in fact, voting blindly for the Labour Party, whatever their record, whatever hardships they impose upon the working class and however many promises they break.

It will be interesting to ask, now, what the Labour Party does to realise Sorensen's dream of people voting on principles and policies. The first step in this should be, of course, for the Labour Party themselves to have some principles for the electors to vote on. But a look at the programmes which they have offered shows that principles are the last things the Labour Party has, or indeed wants.

What has happened, for example, to the "principle" of the nationalisation of land? To the "principle" of abolition of the House of Lords? (Lord Sorensen himself should be able to answer that one.) What has happened to the "principles" put forward by the Labour Party at the more recent elections—nationalisation of "sections of the chemical and machine tools industries" (1955) and the renationalisation of road haulage (1959)?

There was no mention of either of these in Labour's 1964 programme, which means that any elector who was anxious to vote for them, innocently thinking them to be part of Labour's principles, was disappointed.

Even more to the point, what has happened to the Labour Party's opposition to the Commonwealth Immigration Act? When the Conservative government introduced the measure, Labour fought bitterly against it, and perhaps convinced some voters that they did so on grounds of principle. But since then their "principles" have, apparently, changed; the tears of defeat were hardly dry on Gordon Walker's face when Labour's Home Secretary Sir Frank Soskice was telling the House of Commons that, far from abolishing the restrictions on immigrants, the government intends to "... make stricter use of the existing powers of control ...". This must have been very confusing to anyone at Leyton who wanted to vote, as Lord Sorensen advises, on the principle of the thing.

This confusion is cleared up only by realising that the Labour Party has no principle other than their basic support of capitalism. Within that, they will support any policy, temporary or otherwise, which seems expedient. To get into power, they will promise all sorts of things—Gaitskell's tax cuts in 1959, George Brown's three per cent mortgage last October—which they think will attract votes. They do not particularly care who joins their ranks, recruiting freely anyone who will pay their dues. (Some prominent men they have actually invited to join.) Labour's preoccupation with collecting votes means that they do not bother about the intention and knowledge behind the votes. They anxiously solicit the support of people who are politically ignorant. The very last thing they intend to do is to encourage the electors to vote on principles, because that would be the death of them and of the parties like them.

This is not to say that the Labour Party does not offer a substitute for principles. Their leaders are constantly making what seem to be brave statements of conviction and intent, which probably impress people who do not care to look behind the empty phrase. Wilson, for example, told the T.U.C. last September that this is "... a time for choice, for action, for decision, for exciting change ...". Gordon Walker told the voters at Leyton that he stood for "... the abolition of all weapons, both nuclear and conventional, except those needed for internal security and international peacekeeping," which is the same as saying that he stands for the abolition of all weapons except those that he wants to keep. It is this sort of mishmash of nonsense that the Labour Party offer as their principles, and which Lord Sorensen wants us to vote on.

The inevitable result of this is that the vote which elects a Labour MP is unstable. It is not a vote for any political principle, let alone a vote for Socialism, with all that implies. Sometimes it is a vote for a set of capitalist reforms like the National Health Service or an alteration in the Pensions Scheme. More often, it is a vote for a vague and ill-informed idea of what the Labour Party stands for—a vague idea that they stand for the interests of people who live on council estates, for closer relations with Russia and so on.

Perhaps it was this which caused Leyton to pass its scathing verdict on the Labour government before it had even had time to bring in the reforms which it had promised—an apt comment on the instability of a vote which is based on a lack of political consciousness. Perhaps it also brought about the defeat of Gordon Walker at Smethwick; the voters there apparently wanted immigration control yet they rejected a man who, as he himself pointed out, stood for just that.

But an unstable vote which switches from Labour to Tory in one election will as quickly change back to Labour again. It is reasonable to assume that anything which the Labour Party may have lost on the swings of electoral instability they have gained on the roundabouts. There are probably plenty of voters who support the Labour Party because they are convinced that they stand for higher wages, or that they would pursue a different policy from the Tories in disputes like those in Malaysia and Arabia. Now if the Labour Party was as interested in political principles as Lord Sorensen would have us believe, they would discourage such votes by pointing out, firmly and clearly, that on these issues their policy is as imperialist as that of the Tories. But this, of course, is something they never do.

No capitalist party can try to destroy the mutually supporting circle of ignorance and futility which keeps one or other of them in power. Any examination of the policies of these parties, in terms of principles and effectiveness, would compel the admission that practically every one of them was useless and that many of them were inspired by vote-catching expediency. It would compel the admission that, after all the speeches and the programmes and the promises, the problems which afflicted the working class when the Labour Party was

born are still, in one way or another, troubling them today.

The Labour Party would have to admit something else besides. After nearly sixty years of their propaganda, after the position of great power which they have held and still hold, there are still enough workers who harbour racial prejudices to hound a Labour Minister from one Parliamentary seat to another. Racial theories cannot be separated from the rest of the false political ideas which the working class hold, and which the Labour Party have done nothing to dispel. If it is true that racism is among the more primitive and vicious of working class delusions, that is a bitter comment upon the confusion and ignorance which the Labour Party has helped to spread.

They can have no complaint if this confusion, which may help them at one time, harms them at another. From some aspects, elections are depressing affairs, because it is never very inspiring to witness the working class opting for another dose of capitalist suppression. But even more depressing the 1964 election saw the emergence of race as an issue, strongly in some constituencies, and underlying the campaign as a whole.

Douglas-Home has now indicated that the Conservatives intend to bring immigration more and more into the forefront of political controversy. It is not comforting to reflect upon the history of similar situations, and upon the possible outcome of this one. The alarming thing about racial theories is that, unlike most other working class delusions, they are so often asserted in the most extreme and relentless violence. Leyton at the moment is a psephologist's test tube, but who dare say that one day it will not be remembered as the start of the experiment which blew up the laboratory?

IVAN.

Labour Government and armaments

THE Labour Party has always prided itself on being different from the Liberals and Tories in its attitude to armaments and war. It charged the Liberals with having been responsible for the First World War and has often called the Tory leaders war makers. It declared its trust in the League of Nations and later in United Nations as means of preventing war, and condemned the Tories in particular for lack of enthusiasm in supporting the League and UNO. It was always to the fore in declaring its belief in disarmament and in securing peace among the nations through peaceful discussion to settle disputes. It attracted and tolerated a fringe of self-styled pacifists. In its early days it gave a certain amount of lip service to ideas of international working class action to prevent war. One of its best known leaders, Keir Hardie, writing in 1907, claimed for the Labour Party and the parties in other countries with which it was associated that the evil of war was already on the way to being eradicated.

Whatever differences there may be in the International Socialist Movement concerning the tactics to be pursued in achieving Socialism, there is perfect agreement on two leading points of principle: hostility to militarism in all its forms and to war as a method of settling disputes between nations is the first. In countries where the Socialist parties are a real influence in the councils of the nation, the war spirit is suffering appre-

ciable eclipse. It would, for instance, be a difficult task, and one yearly becoming more so, for the rulers of say France and Germany, to again embroil these two nations with each other. Probably the first effective service to which the growing forces of International Socialism will be put will be to make war upon war. The Holy Alliance which Socialism is achieving is not that of crowned heads but of horny hands and therein lies the only real hope there is of peace on earth. The other point of agreement concerns the essential principle of Socialism" (From Serfdom to Socialism).

These were the beliefs and hopes of Keir Hardie at that time: and all of them were wrong, as events were soon to prove. When the war came in 1914 the French and German governments had no difficulty at all in rallying the majority of the workers for war, including the majority of members and supporters of the parties Keir Hardie was writing about. They—and this included Keir Hardie—let themselves be tricked by the plea that in each country "National interests" were at stake and that these involved the working class.

The collapse of the International was represented as a failure of the Socialist movement to stand the test, a charge which was examined and shown to be false in a lengthy article in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* fifty years ago, in the issue of March 1915. It was the collapse not of parties grounded in Socialist

principles but of parties which, in the pursuit of mass membership, had turned aside from the hard task of spreading an understanding of the problem of replacing capitalism by Socialism, to follow the seemingly easy and fruitful road of chasing reforms of capitalism. They were parties aiming merely to take on the administration of capitalism and to show that they could do it as well as their Liberal and Tory rivals.

But the belief still persists among millions of Labour Party supporters that their party can indeed run affairs differently and in particular that they can bring a new attitude towards the avoidance of war. Yet all the evidence of the past Labour governments shows this to be a vain hope.

The Labour Party supported the war in 1914 and joined the coalition government to fight the war. In 1924, in office as a minority Labour government dependent on Liberal votes, they were responsible for expanding the navy and air force though claiming that by concentrating on more deadly but cheaper weapons they were able to cut the overall cost. And at the Labour Party Conference a year later (1925) the Executive was able to defeat a motion to support disarmament with the plea that "they could not afford to ignore the question of defence." Ironically the "enemy" the delegates were asked to fear was not on this occasion Germany, but France.

The Labour Government had, to quote the words of one of their leaders Mr. J. H. Thomas, taken on the job of governing "while accepting the present order of society." They were administering capitalism, and armaments and war are an inescapable responsibility of those who do so. They carried on in the same way in the second Labour Government 1929-1931.

After the second World War, when again they were part of the National Government, they had six years of rule, this time with a large majority but again without any mandate for Socialism. Before they left office if had fallen to them to be involved in the Korean War and to initiate the great rearmament which sent expenditure up from £777 million in 1950-1

to £1,110 million in 1951-2. They were responsible for the development of nuclear weapons. In office again since last October they have made a special feature of their aim to reduce armaments but, according to forecasts of the forthcoming budget (*Sunday Times* 8.1.65.) the expenditure in the coming year is likely to reach the record figure of over £2,000 million.

The Labour government have already found themselves committed to sending troops to Malaysia, with the Navy Minister, Mr. Christopher Mayhew, voicing the possibility of sending additional forces to strengthen the 50,000 men and 70 warships already there. They may before long be involved in Vietnam.

Is it that they want war? Of course not, any more than Keir Hardie did in 1907. But they are pursuing a course which is equally fatal. Capitalism is a jungle of warring capitalist states—on both sides of the Iron Curtain—and in this jungle all governments live by the same rule of force in the pursuit of markets, raw materials etc. The only way out—half glimpsed by Keir Hardie—lies in united working class action to abolish capitalism and establish Socialism, not in alliance with the governments of the separate countries but against all of them. Far from endorsing the Socialist view on this, the Labour Government, like its predecessors, accepts the function of representing British capitalism against the rival capitalist groups.

The Government, and its supporters, devote their efforts to the task of gaining markets for British exports. As a first step towards understanding something about the nature of the capitalism they disown with words but support with deeds, they might ponder a wartime declaration of the late Sir Stafford Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the earlier Labour government:

If after the coming of peace, we were to start once again the vicious circle of international trade competition—we should be lost, and in a few years would be confronting another war.

H.

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Indignity of the old age pension

LET there be no delusions about the purpose of old age pensions. They are not designed primarily to benefit the pensioners. A case in point is the first national pension scheme ever, in this country. The motive behind that scheme, whatever nonsense the politicians talked about it, was to find a cheaper way of keeping the old geezers going than sending them to the workhouse. Since then, the pension has been increased many times, but it is still inadequate to keep an old person in any sort of comfort. Hence the fact that millions of pensioners have to resort to National Assistance.

The basic pension for a single person is £3.7.6. a week. In London a furnished room costs a minimum of about £2.10.0. a week, which leaves very little for heating, cooking, beer, tobacco, clothes and food. Perhaps economies are possible; very little heat would be needed to cook the paltry amount of food which could be bought on that budget. Yet this is what Sir Alec Douglas Home referred to as "sharing in prosperity." Truly, someone is prosperous, but it is not the worn out workers who make up the army of old age pensioners.

But, say the defenders of the Welfare State, there is always National Assistance. The N.A.B. considers that a single person needs £3.16.0. a week for needs other than rent. It is of course difficult to find out what allowance the Board makes for a pensioner's rent, but so far as one can judge from published correspondence, it has been about £2.10.0. for a single person and £4.10.0. for a married couple. This, obviously, is acceptable to a pensioner, but it represents something far from prosperity, or even moderate security.

The scheme is bedevilled by complications and anomalies. For example, if pensioners live in a council house or flat, they are deemed to be paying a reduced rent, and their National Assistance reduced accordingly. They are investigated by the council and by the N.A.B.—the council want their rent, the Board want to keep their payments as low as they can. However delicately the investigations are carried out, the pensioners' dignity is bruised; many of them, indeed, refuse to apply to the N.A.B. for that reason.

After a lot of cogitation the late Tory government introduced a "graduated" pension scheme. This was supposed to be a wonderful improvement. When the fanfares died away, it was apparent that the new scheme meant that a slightly higher pension would be paid, after higher contributions from workers and employers.

One thing which came to light later on, when the Labour government were proposing to increase pensions, was that, under certain conditions, the pensioners stood to lose under the graduated scheme. When the Labour government's Bill was being debated, the Conservatives introduced an amendment to increase the weekly payments to those who worked after they were sixty-five. Referring to the existing scales,

Lt. Cdr. Maydon (C. Wells) former parliamentary secretary, Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance, said that if a single man deferred his retirement for the full five years, the State would be better off by £1,385. The man would have to live until he was 95 years old before he broke even (*Daily Telegraph*, 4.12.64).

It is, we need hardly say, not curious that the Tories did not draw attention to this point when they originally introduced the Graduated scheme.

The amendment which Lt. Cdr. Maydon was supporting was rejected by the Labour government, in their familiar pose of the Pensioners' Friend, on the grounds that they are engaged in a general review of all social security provisions. They now

propose to increase the basic pension to £4.0.0. for a single person and £6.10.0. for a married couple. These new scales will come into force at the end of March. The Assistance payments are also increased, by 12.6d. and £1.1.0. respectively.

These modest rises amount to the Labour Government's redemption of their election promises. The postponement of the higher payments until March 19th., while the rise in MP's pay was backdated, aroused some misgivings among Labour MP's, but the official answer at the time was that the amount of extra clerical work involved prevented any earlier increases. Then Mr. George Brown, Minister of Economic Affairs, let one of his many cats out of one of his many bags. Speaking at the Labour Conference at Brighton, he admitted that it was the economic ministers, Mr. Callaghan and himself, who had advised against earlier payment. "We simply," he said, "in this situation, could not do more than we have done."

At this stage, we cannot foresee what will result from the present Review. But one thing is certain. The pensioners have nothing to hope for from the Labour Party, which upheld the Means Test when they were in office in the Thirties and which kept the pensioners worse off, when they were in power after the war, than did the subsequent Conservative governments.

As long as capitalism lasts, old people are going to suffer the indignities and deprivations which are inseparable from them today. Capitalism is interested in its workers only so long as they are a source of profit when they grow old they become just another Social Problem. But somehow they must be kept, so the State levies a contribution, from both the workers and their employers, to finance the payment of pensions later on. The basic concern is to keep capitalism running. Pensions are a side issue, full of the anomalies of what were the Ten Shilling widows, the disabled hanging on to life with their feeble fingertips, the embarrassments of National Assistance.

Yet the pensioners have a hope. They cannot, like their younger fellow workers, strike to improve their conditions. But there are six million of them and that is an awful lot of votes. That is why they are wooed and promised the Earth, by Labour and Tory Parties alike. At the moment, young and old are deceived by the promises. But they could use their vote, in unity, to set up the world of freedom and dignity, for human beings throughout their lives.

RAMO.

Spring School

at CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, WC1
on SATURDAY, MARCH 6th

Two Lectures on the Labour Theory of Value
given by E. HARDY

2.30 pm THEORY

5.00 pm APPLICATION

There will be a tea break at 4.30 pm and from
7.30-10.30 a social evening has been
arranged with refreshments and music.

Controlling unemployment

We have referred many times in these columns to the fact that American academic economists are seriously questioning the adequacy of traditional Keynesian policies to deal with unemployment. One leading American economist wrote in 1963: "Our problems of unemployment have seemingly become chronic." But it is precisely chronic unemployment which Keynesian policies are supposed to prevent.

In his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* which appeared in 1936, Keynes set out to show how it was that capitalist economies of the free enterprise variety did not automatically lead to full employment. He said that unemployment and stagnation were caused by a lack of "effective demand." Keynes went on to suggest a number of ways of dealing with such "demand deficiency" unemployment: stricter control of investment, a redistribution of income in favour of the poor, budget deficits and various other fiscal and monetary measures to encourage effective demand and investment. This is the so-called Keynesian revolution, the application of deliberate fiscal and monetary policies by the government to try to affect the workings of free enterprise capitalism.

From 1958 on, unemployment in America has averaged 6 per cent despite the application of Keynesian policies. It is this that has started economists questioning. Consider the views of Robert Lekachman expressed in a book published last year. Of the advanced countries he writes,

The original simplicities of Keynesian policy prescriptions have been overtaken by the actual complexities and contradictions of applying monetary and fiscal techniques to situations simultaneously subject to inflation and unemployment, or high interest rates and gold outflows, or falling demand and rising prices. The dilemmas of recent American economic policy exemplify this point. President Kennedy's major response to unsatisfactory rates of unemployment was the 1963 program of tax reduction and tax reform. Now if simple Keynesian fiscal policy were enough, such a program would dependably stimulate aggregate spending, diminish unemployment, and restore the economy to some approximation of full-capacity operation. Yet even Administration spokesmen have made comparatively cautious claims for the spread and the adequacy of this policy, and few economists indeed believe that by itself tax policy is capable of reducing unemployment to tolerable levels. It is a sign of the times that this tolerable level has itself shown a secular tendency to rise from 2½-3 per cent to 4-5 per cent. For the sad, uncomfortable fact may be that just about the time that some version of the simplest Keynesian revelation has at last won the hearts of businessmen and politicians, the nature of the economic problem has sufficiently changed to require different remedies and different theoretical justifications to support them (Keynes' *General Theory: Report of Three Decades*).

It is true that the American economy did show signs of increased activity in 1964 but unemployment was still around five per cent with four per cent as the "tolerable level" as Lekachman suggests.

Capitalism will not break down in depression and stagnation as a result of the inability of the working class to buy back what they produce, as has sometimes been suggested. If this were so, the Keynesians would have some justification for their claim to have found an alternative to socialism. In fact, the capitalist system will continue until the working class

organise to end it. In the meantime its growth will be accompanied by a trade cycle involving periods of unemployment and prosperity. So the shoe is on the other foot. It is we Socialists who are in a position to point out that the Keynes theory on its own admission has proved incapable of dealing adequately with the problem of chronic unemployment in America.

African capitalists

The capitalist system is still spreading rapidly throughout the world turning peasants and tribesmen into wage-workers. In Asia, Africa and Latin America new capitalist states are emerging. Some of these, as in Cuba or Ghana, are totalitarian state-capitalist regimes in which the emerging working class is subjected to an industrialising elite. In others like India and Nigeria the emergence of capitalism is not forced and controlled to such an extent.

It is under such regimes that from the motley collection of shopkeepers, traders and contractors a more substantial group of big capitalists is allowed to evolve. A recent supplement to the international edition of the *New York Times* introduces some of the new capitalists of Africa to American businessmen. In Nigeria there are Sir Mobolaji Bank-Anthony and Chief Shafi Lawal Edu. Sir Mobolaji is, we are told, "either owner, chairman or director of 10 large corporations." His compatriot is "chairman of the African Alliance Insurance Company, and serves on the boards of several companies." In Somalia there is fish-processing magnate Abdullahi Omar who:

... for several years operated his own general store in Hargeisa, and then moved to Mogadiscio, Somalia, in 1960 after independence. He established a wholesale import agency and interested himself in the fishing potential of his country. He recently established Somalia's first steel and wood furniture factory and is negotiating with American interests for the opening in June of a pickled-skis plant.

In Uganda there is Jayant Madhvani who is supposed to be the wealthiest man in East Africa. He:

... heads the Madhvani group of companies based on Jinja. These include sugar, tea, coffee, textiles, steel, paper and more than a dozen other companies operating in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. In Uganda alone, Madhvani enterprises account for more than 10 per cent of total product.

At present this group of "non-European" capitalists is only small in number but as capitalist development proceeds more can be expected to appear. The working class in Africa has the choice of being exploited by and subjected to such a group of wealthy magnates or to an industrialising elite of nationalist political leaders. Either way they suffer. Either way the fact is brought out that the important social division in these newly emergent capitalisms is that of class, not race or colour.

A.L.B.

CONFERENCE RALLY

at CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, WC1
on GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 16th, 7.30 pm

International Platform of Speakers

Churchill in perspective

SUFFICIENT time has passed since Churchill's funeral for popular emotions to wane—but not sufficient yet to make it likely that his words and deeds will be subjected to any analysis for popular consumption. No doubt historians in the future will discover reasons to doubt his greatness, but there is no need to await the passage of time.

In what way can he be considered great? His actions concerning the working class, his military prowess, his flair for foreign affairs?

It was he who called out the troops during the Dock Strike in 1911. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the government which put on the statute book the 1927 Trades Disputes Act, prohibiting strikes by one group of workers in sympathy with another, curtailing the right of picketing, and preventing the Civil Service unions affiliating to the T.U.C.

He recognised the inability of economists to understand capitalism, and he admitted inadequacies in the system, particularly "the strange discordance between the producing and consuming power." (*Daily Telegraph*, 20.6.30.)

The *News Chronicle* (10.11.43.) reported him as saying.

I regard it as a definite part of the duty and responsibility of this National Government to have it set about a vast and practical scheme to make sure that in the years immediately following the war there will be food, work and homes for all.

But by 1948, the war over and there not being the same need to urge workers to greater efforts, he was arguing against "precise elaborate programmes." In 1952, back in office, he was stressing the need for three years to elapse before any improvement would show. He left the government in 1955—and today the old problems of "food, work and homes" are still with us.

Churchill the military man certainly had some grand concepts. Commenting on the expeditions to Antwerp and Gallipoli, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says:

In both cases the strategic concept was brilliant, but the forces required for their success were not forthcoming, and Churchill's own impatience contributed to their failure.

It reports Churchill as describing the Dardanelles campaign as "a legitimate war gamble." (The *Encyclopaedia Americana* records the British losses as over 33,000 killed, 78,000 wounded and 7,000 missing. Turkish and French casualties were also very high.) What sort of man can make a legitimate gamble of the lives of hundreds of thousands of men?

In the second volume of the *Official British History of the Second World War* by Major L. F. Ellis, it appears that in 1940, when Churchill was being built up as the great war leader, his telegrams and messages to Lord Gort, Commander in Chief of the British Expeditionary Force were, "not always relevant" and he "did not grasp the nature of the German threat to the B.E.F. as a whole, nor the weakness of the Belgian position."

What is the basis for Churchill's claim to greatness in the field of foreign affairs? It is said that he was one of the few who in the Thirties understood the ambitions of Nazi Germany. But his own words show that he was not opposed to dictatorship in principle.

After the 1914-18 War, he stated his policy as "Peace to the German people, war on the Bolshevik tyranny." In 1927 he was "charmed, . . . by Signor Mussolini's gentle and simple bearing, and by his calm, detached poise in spite of many

burdens and dangers."

The *Evening Standard* (2.4.37.) reports Churchill as saying,

It is certain that if Franco wins, he will be in no position to interfere with British and French interests in the Mediterranean. The Germans and Italians will have little or no influence upon Spanish policy once the firing stops.

But by April 5th the same paper reports him as saying, "A thoroughly Nazified Spain, retaining its German nucleus, may well be a cause of profound anxiety to both France and Britain."

Events were causing him to change his words, and not only towards Spain:

We should not go cap in hand to Soviet Russia, but how impossibly foolish we should be . . . to put needless barriers in the way of the general association of the great Russian mass with the resistance to an act of Nazi aggression (*News Chronicle*, 10.5.38.)

Compare this with his statement, reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, (7.11.38.): "I have always said that if Great Britain were defeated in war, I hope we should find a Hitler to lead us back to our rightful position among the nations."

It cannot be more clear, Churchill was not opposed to the Fascist powers as long as they did not threaten British capitalist interests. He thought "great men" could secure Britain's position in the world, but after the war he had to accept that Britain, compared with the USA and Russia, was a second-rate power. No Hitler or Churchill can do anything to change that.

What, then, has Churchill achieved? The economic, social and political problems remain broadly the same as 90 years ago—war, want, insecurity are as current now as when he was born. Perhaps there was some truth in the description of him by another, similarly unsuccessful and similarly revered, capitalist politician, Aneurin Bevan; "the mediocrity of his thinking is concealed by the majesty of his words."

Churchill was a member of the British capitalist class and he served his class well. He maintained a constant anti-working class attitude throughout his life. In the military and foreign fields he was no more successful than other possible leaders. He became the spokesman for British capitalism during a period when its future was endangered, and used his gift for words to spur the working class to greater efforts for the benefit of their masters.

In death, as in life, he served our rulers well. The pomp and ceremony of his funeral was a circus for the diversion of the working class. The entire pulpit—religious, political, press and radio—have been loud in his praise. Here was a man, they said, for workers to look up to, to recognise as a leader, and in so doing to pay homage to future leaders and to the principle of leadership.

Here perhaps we may rephrase Bevan's comment, and apply it to all leaders—The failure of their actions is concealed by the majesty of their promises.

Where did Churchill lead the workers? Where will any leaders take them? Workers have only to reflect on their experiences—not for Churchill and his class, but for those they dominate, is it a life of blood, sweat, toil and tears.

And it will remain so, until the same workers who are now deluded into an hysterical hero worship of men like Churchill, learn that their interests lie in dispensing with leaders and setting up a social system in which all men stand equally.

K.K.

Who are the hungry?

When I was a youngster, my parents had the sort of struggle to clothe and feed their children that was common enough in those days. With the Old Man often out of work, Ma had to turn her hand to any job available—charring mainly—for a few shillings. Like many other working class children, we were badly clothed and housed, and while perhaps we did not actually starve, we were often hungry.

At that time, it would have been ludicrous to suggest that we give to funds aimed at preventing starvation or alleviating poverty in other parts of the world. Ma would have laughed that one bitterly out of court. We were already recipients of charity in one form or another—coal, food parcels and other children's leftoffs—and it was cold comfort to be told that there were always those worse off than ourselves.

Times have now changed, we are assured. Ma is dead and Pa draws National Assistance to keep him ticking over in his declining days. The overt charity has more or less dried up, although he does get occasional gifts and treats from the old age pensioners' club. He doesn't go hungry, although from what I can see of it, a lot of what he eats is starchy filler with not much food value. Ironically, two or three years ago he was frequently an interested reader of *The Good Food Guide*, a yearly catalogue of recommended eating houses in the British Isles.

Ironical from another angle too. This book is published by *The Good Food Club*, which recently allowed OXFAM access to its address lists for circularising an invitation to an "austerity supper." The meal would consist of a bowl of herbs and rice, with cold water. The charge, said the letter, would be two guineas, the balance after meeting costs to go to OXFAM funds. Pa got one of the circulars.

Now no one is suggesting that there was any calculated insult intended. Of course OXFAM could not know that they were writing to an old age pensioner, and anyway, he did not take it amiss—merely laughed. It is the whole basic concept of such bodies as OXFAM that must be challenged. In a world where there are over forty million refugees and around half the population underfed, an organisation like this can barely begin to scratch the surface of the problem, granting their sincerity every inch of the way.

I have before me one or two of OXFAM's appeal adverts. One tells us that:

Millions of the world's families have no great hope for 1965. To them it will be just another year in the endless battle against hunger, disease and the terrible, grinding poverty.

And another says that OXFAM will be:

Helping them get enough to eat, buying them medicines, giving them a roof over their heads. But most important, helping them free themselves from a life sentence of poverty—with education, training, new tools.

So from this you could be forgiven for thinking that these problems are associated perhaps with the "backward" areas. Politicians do anyway lend credence to it by talking about "aid to underdeveloped countries" (e.g. Mr. Wilson at the beginning of January). But it is not so. The foremost capitalist country in the world—USA—has such an appalling poverty problem that writers are often drawing attention to it.

According to government figures . . . 56 per cent of low-income farm families were deficient in one or more basic nutrients in the diet. The rural poor were even worse off. Seventy per cent suffered from this deficiency. Thus there is hunger in the midst of abundance. (Michael Harrington, *The Other America*.)

Yet OXFAM would think it ridiculous to spend their funds in the USA. They concentrate exclusively on the extreme poverty and hunger which are rooted in primitive agriculture and inadequate physical means of production, poor land etc. These may of course aggravate a local condition under capitalism, but there is no doubt that the world at large is capable of feeding everyone—if properly organised.

Aye, there's the rub. Wheat stored away in river backwaters, lettuces and potatoes ploughed back into the soil, and land deliberately taken out of cultivation, all to try and keep up the prices to a profitable level. The fact that people starve in the meantime is a mere incidental. The market is the all powerful god under capitalism. And this not only in Western countries. Only last month we drew attention to the deliberate burning of cocoa in Ghana for precisely the same reason as above. If OXFAM are thinking of spending some of their money in this backward area, we wonder what they think about such news as that.

The tragedy of OXFAM, Freedom from Hunger, War on Want, and other such organisations is not just their failure to make any worthwhile effect on the problem. It is their refusal even to glimpse its causes or to question a world which can destroy food stocks wholesale in one place and let millions starve in another.

Conservative Security.

I noticed a giant poster, presumably a leftover from the general election, on a hoarding at the top of our road a week or two ago. "For a safer world, vote Conservative" it screamed at me from the usual bilious red white and blue colour scheme. It was the use of the comparative "safer" I found intriguing. Did it mean safer than right now. or

Public Meeting

Thursday, 18th March, 8 pm

CHALLENGE OF SOCIALISM

HAMPSTEAD TOWN HALL

Haverstock Hill, NW3
(opposite Belsize Park Tube)

GLASGOW PUBLIC MEETING

Woodside Public Halls
Sunday, 14th March, 7.30 pm

SOCIALISM OR LABOUR GOVERNMENT

Speaker: J. D'Arcy (London).

perhaps safer when the Conservatives were last in power, or just safer in a general sense?

Whichever way you look at it, the underlying theme is that political parties in general and the Conservative Party in particular, can appreciably affect the safety of the world by their policies. The Tories would not of course suggest that their opponents were deliberately pushing the world to the verge of another war. Rather would they be inclined to say that it was their ineptitude which was doing the damage, and that only the return of the Conservatives can restore matters.

Well let's have a brief look at it. In the past fifty years there have been two world wars, both supported by the Tories. They were in power for quite a large part of that period. Not a particularly peaceful one. In the years of the postwar Labour government, it was remarkable how Tory support could be guaranteed for actions involving armed force or the threat of it, such as Greece, Berlin and Korea.

What of the years which followed? When they returned to power in 1951, the Conservatives had already made the usual vague promises about "our contribution to peace," but whatever this may have meant to them in theory, what happened in practice was the almost chronic bloodshed in Cyprus, and the crises in Suez, Lebanon and Berlin (again). A safer world?

I would not have called it that, but there's an amazing flexibility of meaning to such words when spoken by capitalist statesmen. Anyway, they were not discouraged and were busy telling us again later that "Peace is one more reason why Conservative government is good government." (*Guardian* advert 17.8.59.). In the five years which followed that little piece of double talk, we have had more bloodletting in Cyprus and the agonising Cuba affair, not to mention smaller incidents in various parts of the world.

The truth is that the Conservative Party is no more a party of peace than of war. Like its Labour counterpart it is committed to running British capitalism and protecting its interests at home and abroad. At times this will mean sending men out to fight and die. That is why, even allowing for differences of opinion and errors of judgment, the views of government and opposition are so close, especially in the field of foreign policy. That is why also, there will always be those on either side who will jeer that the others are stealing their thunder, or protest that their party is becoming contaminated with the other side's ideas. This was the very gist of one speaker's complaint at the Young Conservatives' Conference on February 7th.

But the net result is still the same. It is still a very unsafe world in which to live because the conflicting interests of capitalism make it so. Far from influencing the course of events to any great extent, the Conservative and other capitalist

parties must frame their policies to meet the events and then hope for the best.

Propaganda Broadside.

Have you noticed a crop of newspaper adverts about South Africa recently? Those I have seen glowingly describe the place as "a developing community of nations" or "rich in resources and rewards" or "the British Motor Industry's biggest single export market." The South African government is obviously anxious to build up a favourable picture particularly, it seems, in Britain, and if in the process the truth gets a bit discoloured that's not likely to worry them over-much.

Take for example their claim of January 26th:

The structure of non-white wages has been, and is constantly being, raised to realistic levels of economic and social requirements . . . thousands of African workers . . . seek an opportunity to work and earn better wages on South African farms and in the mines and factories.

Somewhat vague, but definitely calculated to create a good impression would you think? Now compare it with a United Nations report only two weeks earlier:

Africans working for foreign companies in S.W. Africa live as though in slavery. . . . The policy of Apartheid . . . offers . . . every opportunity for the exploitation of the indigenous inhabitants. . . . The very low level of African wages, the lack of development of the native reserves, and the evils of the migratory labour system, result in misery and untold sufferings.

Maybe it's as well that Socialists have a sort of built-in scepticism which makes them examine everything they are told with a supercritical eye. But as you can see, we don't always have to make conscious efforts at disproving the falsehoods spread around by one ruling class or the other. South African racial policies have provoked hostility among the new "coloured" states, and some of the older capitalist states are coming out against them too. So it's not surprising that reports like this one appear from time to time, and South Africa comes under fire from the other paragons of virtue at the U.N.

What we should bear in mind is that there has been evidence of harsh and oppressive conditions there for many years, but it is only recently that outside interests have demanded any fuss be made about it. Quite clearly brotherly love is only a minor consideration in this new-found desire for racial equality. "Exploitation for all workers, regardless of race" is the real battle cry behind the pious slop uttered by the winds-of-change-merchants.

E.T.C.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor,

With reference to News in Review (December 1964). Some of your criticisms of the apolitical attitude of the Committee of 100 are probably justified. But by their courage they have had more success in a couple of years in getting ideas through to the general public than the SPGB has had in a lifetime.

As you say, the Committee is tackling subjects only remotely connected with the

Bomb, perhaps (with a little encouragement—not abuse) the next development will be Direct Action for Peace and Socialism.

BILL EVETT, Secretary West Ham YCND.

REPLY

There is really no great problem in "getting ideas through to the public", provided we are not particular about what sort of ideas they are.

The SPGB is small, not because we have not worked hard to propagate our ideas, but because the working class does not support Socialism.

The progress of the Socialist movement depends upon the growth of political consciousness among the working class. The Committee of 100, like the other organisations which stand for capitalist reform, have not helped in this. They have only spread

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NEWS IN REVIEW

Respectable revolt

Straws which are currently in the wind of British capitalism are rumblings of militancy in the so-called middle class, and the re-occurrence of the plea for more unemployed.

Some teachers and doctors have recently considered withdrawing their labour power, the former from schools and the latter from the National Health Scheme. Their reasons, basically, were concerned with their pay.

Doctors and teachers have long considered the strike as unprofessional, and in bad taste. But capitalism does not exempt any worker from the need to fight to maintain and increase his standard of living; and if doctors and teachers remain quiescent their standard of living must suffer.

Before the war when unemployment was widespread the "secure" teachers grumbled about their pay. Doctors got their patients in a free market, and many in the poorest working class districts were little better off than their patients.

Now both groups are complaining about their financial rewards; they are finding that a sense of vocation is no weapon in this competitive society. So they are considering the withdrawal of their labour power—in other words, using the weapon which marks them as members of the working class.

There is another way of losing your pay.

Lord Plowden, former Chief Planning Officer and Chairman of the Economic Planning Board, also chairman of Tube Investment Co. Ltd., and director of four other companies, was reported in the *Daily Telegraph* in January as wanting . . . "better use of the labour force . . . this would lead to transitional unemployment . . . to do everything possible to mitigate the resulting hardship."

"This is what we mean when we say that we want increased productivity, and why should we be mealy-mouthed about it?"

Capitalists are not opposed to unemployment if they think it necessary. Plowden wants to replace the carrot with the stick, on the theory that there is nothing like a dose of unemployment to increase productivity.

Is Lord Plowden himself prepared to live on the dole? Or is that a fate reserved for the workers on whom he so coldly

theorises? These are questions which no highly paid servant of capitalism should want to duck.

Unless, that is, he is being mealy mouthed.

Everlasting milk

The news which came out during the first week of last month, that British scientists had developed a method of treating milk which will make it last for months, was greeted in the newspapers with all the customary enthusiasm.

The chairman of the Express Dairy, Mr. W. E. D. Bell, helped the enthusiasm along a bit by proclaiming: "At last, we can feed milk to the two-thirds of the world that is starving." He might as well have said that at last they could break into a market which up to now has been held by dried milk, which is easier to handle and transport than the liquid.

The Express are not, of course, about to throw in their hand with OXFAM and become a charitable institution. They quickly set up a new company to deal with the export of the new milk. Orders have been received from Central America and some shipping lines, and more may follow from the British and United States Navies.

It was not the desire to feed the hungry which was responsible for this haste. Mr. Bell made it clear: "We must," he said. "Pull our fingers out and get this project going before the Swiss or anybody move in."

At the time of writing, the new process has not been approved by the government for milk sold on the home market. Exported milk is not covered by the need for official approval. If the new milk is approved for home distribution, there will probably be considerable savings for the dairy industry whose bugbear, like other branches of agriculture, has always been the expensive business of rush distribution.

Agriculture is as much tied to the need to make profits as any other industry, and it is constantly looking for ways around its distribution problems. Hence the development of massive, mechanised farms, of the broiler hen and the beef factories. Hence the rise of the frozen food industry.

Some people, derided as crackpots, have questioned the effects which all this has on the food. But as long as there is a profit to be made, or increased, who cares about quality? Capitalism

encourages the shoddy rush job in many of its industries, and there is no reason why agriculture should be an exception.

This is the motive behind the everlasting milk. The *Sunday Times* thought that, apart from anything the Express will get out of the new product, "... it offers a way of giving the dairy farmers more for their milk without raising the price to the public."

The profit priorities of capitalism affect every aspect of our lives. Everywhere we go, everything we wear, the very air we breathe, everything we eat and drink, is polluted by it. And all the time there is the smokescreen of hypocrisy about human interests—about, for example, feeding the world's hungry when the real motive is to make life more comfortable yet for the privileged few.

Vietnam

For some reason, it has suddenly become fashionable for journalists to use some peculiar words about the war which is currently being fought in Vietnam.

They have called it the "unnecessary" war, the "tragic" war, the "forgotten" war. As if all wars are not tragic, unnecessary affairs.

The Americans, deeply involved, have their own description of the war. It is, they say a vital war, because it is being fought to defend freedom. Every time the American jets go in, President Johnson claims that they fire their rockets in the cause of liberty.

We are, as usual, invited to accept the story that in Vietnam one side (the North—theirs) stands for brutal dictatorship and the other (the South—ours) stands for liberty and brotherhood.

But the South Vietnamese have shown what they mean by freedom and brotherhood by the manner in which they maltreat their prisoners. One of their recent tricks was to use a wounded prisoner (who later died) as a human mine detector—to send him wading across a river to detonate any mines on the bed.

This is only one piece of the surface evidence which shows up that it is barefaced nonsense to claim that the war in Vietnam is for freedom. In fact, the United States are involved in the war for familiar, classical reasons.

They are interested in the strategic position of Vietnam, and in the bases which they have set up there. They are desperately concerned that the expanding

Chinese threat to the established powers in the Far East should be held in check.

The British capitalist class, who have their own troubles a little further south, are reluctant to become involved in Vietnam. British influence in the Far East was extensively diminished during the last war, and although there is still a lot of British capital invested out there, the protection of it is largely the concern of the U.S.A.

The Soviet Union is also reluctant to get involved, but is having its hand forced. They also fear Chinese ambitions; hence the belligerent words from Moscow—which remain no more than words.

The *Economist's* prophecy of the outcome of Premier Kosygin's visit to Hanoi was remarkably accurate:

Mr. Kosygin is virtually certain to proclaim . . . that (American) attacks would involve the risk of nuclear escalation. In exchange, the Russians may well urge the North Vietnamese not to push their present military advantage in the south too far.

Vietnam is a typical local struggle in the wider conflict of interests between the great blocs of capitalism with China, struggling for its place in the world power line up, an aggravation. China's belligerency is customary for an upstart capitalist power; customary also are the efforts which the established powers are making to stifle her.

This could mean that the Vietnam battle will not escalate (ugly word) into a major nuclear war. But mistakes and miscalculations have been known before.

If Vietnam does prove to be the first spark in a world wide conflagration the result will be an unnecessary war, a tragic war but one which, if there is any-

one left to remember it, will not be forgotten.

Gordon-Walker and immigration

The defeat of Patrick Gordon-Walker at the so-called safe seat of Leyton provided both press and politicians with a field day for comment and speculation. A number of reasons for the surprise result were suggested; in a survey just after the by-election, *The Observer* placed coloured immigration at the head of the list, with Labour voters the majority to voice dissatisfaction on this problem.

When the Conservative government introduced a bill curbing the flow of immigrants into this country, the Labour Opposition resisted it, creating the impression that they were in favour of unlimited free entry. Disastrously for a party seeking mass support, they overlooked the political climate. It is possible that their slender majority at the general election was caused partly by this. Gordon-Walker had the job of opposing the Tory bill in Parliament and this has made him an obvious whipping boy in what the press is fond of calling the white backlash.

At Smethwick, his Conservative opponent, by using an extremist minority as his supporters, played on the electorate's prejudices, and their fears of the growth of a large coloured population in Britain. While the fascists ranted and raved and worked on a suppressed sore, the Tories got the benefit. At Leyton the racial question and immigration were smothered by the three main candidates, but Gordon-Walker was pestered by Nazi

gadflies.

Most workers, irrespective of colour and race, fear a sudden mass influx of foreign workers because they see them as a threat to their jobs and as an aggravation of the housing shortage. On top of this is a fear that people coming from less developed areas may be willing to accept lower wages and social standards.

Immigrants have entered Britain before, but they have been mainly European and were therefore quickly assimilated. It would, for example, be difficult to trace the whereabouts of the Germans who came to Britain in Edwardian times. The recent wave of immigrants is vastly different. The colour of their skin makes it impossible for them to be quickly submerged and forgotten. They stimulate a multitude of primitive fears among the working class.

But what will happen if the coloured population of this country increases enormously? Most coloured people are just part of the working class, subject to the same rough end of the economic stick as their white brothers. In time the demands of industrialism will destroy their own customs and they will appear similar to the Anglo-Saxons, Celts, Poles etc, that go to make up the British population.

Smethwick, Leyton and Gordon-Walker are examples of how it is impossible to operate vague humanitarian concepts in a capitalist society. The government has in fact already announced much stricter screening of coloured immigrants at the points of entry. Thus do capitalism and a non-socialist working class destroy the best laid plans of mice and men.

DID THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT FAIL IN 1914

We are now at the root of the whole matter of the failure of the "European Socialist Movement" to take up and maintain the Socialist position in the recent crisis. These gigantic political organisations which disposed of so many millions of votes were not Socialist organisations. They were not founded upon the principle of the class struggle. They had not done the work of politically educating their supporters. They had not built up their strength upon an electorate understanding the working-class position and desiring revolution. These millions of so-called Socialist voters did not understand the class division in society, and did not, therefore, realise the unity of interest of the workers the world over, and the clash between the interests of the working class

and the master class, at every point, nationally and internationally. Their votes had been attracted by all manner of nostrums and side-issues, and simply expressed opinions thereon, and not on the vital matter of working-class emancipation.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain calls the attention of the workers of this and other lands to the fact that, founded as a political organisation upon Socialist principles, it has maintained the true working-class position in relation to the war without difficulty. We cannot boast of the support of millions of voters at the polls, but no one can point to a single word or deed of ours, in this time of crisis, which has been a betrayal of the cause of the proletariat. Well for Socialism, well for the stricken workers,

well for the great cause of humanity, if, when the present riot of anarchy is over, and those who have to pay for it in blood and tears come to count the cost and apportion the blame, they realise that the political party of Socialism, weak though it was in numbers, was strong enough to denounce the war on all sides, strong enough to expose the misleaders of Labour and their purchased "patriotism", strong enough to avow and maintain, in the face of a frenzy of insane nationalism, the unity of interest of the workers of all countries, strong enough to remain Socialists and keep the flag of Socialism flying.

From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, March 1915.

BOOKS

William Morris as a socialist

WILLIAM MORRIS: THE MAN AND THE MYTH.
R. Page Arnot.

William Morris, the poet and designer of the Victorian era, is not generally thought of as a Marxian Socialist. He is either praised for his artistic contributions or pictured as a Utopian sentimentalist. In fact Morris was a prominent and active member of one of the pioneer Marxist organisations in Britain, the Socialist League, which was founded in 1884 by a group of people who broke away from the Social Democratic Federation because of the dictatorial attitude of its founder, H. M. Hyndman.

The League, in the words of its manifesto, advocated "the principles of revolutionary international socialism." This manifesto was written by Morris. Morris also served on the League's executive committee, edited its official journal, wrote pamphlets and leaflets, addressed indoor and street-corner meetings and sold its literature. An examination of his writings will show that Morris had a clear grasp of the theory of exploitation and the materialist conception of history.

Economics and history were not, however, his specialities. Where Morris can be said to have made a real contribution to socialist theory is in bringing out the positive side of Socialism. Anyone who regards his *News From Nowhere* as mere Utopianism misses the point altogether. Morris was not painting a detailed picture of the future society rather was he outlining what he saw as the possibilities

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their own confusion among the working class at large.

In our December issue, we drew attention to an example of this. The anti-nuclear movement once said that the only issue worth concentrating on was nuclear disarmament; now they are chasing up and down the old, well trodden blind alleyways of reform. And still their original object is as far away as ever.

A movement like that could never stand for Socialism. Mr. Evett, for example, adds his own little bit of confusion to the rest by referring to "Direct Action for Peace and Socialism".

The only hope lies in a party which remains steadfast in its Socialist principles, and does its best to convince people like Mr. Evett of the futility of demonstrating for capitalist reform instead of working for the system's overthrow.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

ties of Socialism. He was attempting to describe what relations between people could be like when freed from the cash nexus. Other of his writings such as *Art, Labour and Socialism* and *Useful Work versus Useless Toil* explains why work is a drudgery under capitalism and how it can be a pleasure under socialism.

William Morris's views are interesting for another reason. The early Marxian Socialist movement in Britain and North America spent much time in discussing whether a Socialist party should have a programme of immediate demands, of parliamentary reforms. This question came up for discussion at the annual conference of the Socialist League in 1887.

The League contained many diverse elements including out-and-out anarchists. Some of the branches (supported incidentally by Engels) were in favour of trying to get into Parliament and of drawing up a list of "palliatives" as a parliamentary programme. The anarchists, naturally, were opposed to this. So was William Morris, but for different reasons. While not opposed to parliamentary action altogether, Morris was opposed to the League acquiring a programme of palliatives or reforms.

In his opinion there was a need of "a body of principle" to abstain from such opportunism. He suggested that for a Socialist organisation to contest elections on such a programme would end in the election of Socialists on non-Socialist votes. Morris was, however, prepared to work with those who favoured a reform programme and after he had resigned from the League following its capture by the anarchist section he signed a manifesto, together with Hyndman and Bernard Shaw, calling for a united socialist party.

Twenty years after the breakaway of the Socialist League from the SDF, another break occurred—and for the same reasons. Hyndman's dictatorial attitude and the organisation's opportunism. Those who broke away were to form the Socialist Party of Great Britain. From the very beginning, after the benefit of further discussions of the issue of a reform programme especially in America, the Socialist Party was—and still is—uncompromisingly opposed to a programme of immediate demands.

It would be ungenerous of us not to recognise that William Morris usefully contributed to the discussion among early socialists which led to the adoption of this principle by our party. Morris was quite conscious of the fact that his position was a departure from that of German Social

Democracy.

This book contains further information on Morris' position on this question, with the publication for the first time of some of his letters to J. L. Mahon, who was for a time the secretary of the League. Page Arnot has done some useful research but the commentary in this book, despite the new material, is incredibly bad.

Arnot creates a new myth, one of Morris as a forerunner of the so-called Communist Party of which he (Arnot) is a member. We are told that because of his position on reforms Morris was a "leftist" of the sort attacked by Lenin in his *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* (incidentally a type which has always been given short-shrift by the Communist Party). Surely the choicest piece of distortion is that which tells us that the *British Road to Socialism*, the current programme of Arnot's party, is a detailed version of *News From Nowhere!*

A.L.B.

Hurrah for capitalism!

AN INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS
by J. C. Powicke and P. H. May, Arnold.

At school we were all taught a spurious brand of history, but formal instruction in economics has only recently appeared in school curricula. It is thought convenient that the average worker should take a pride in the history of Britain and the British Empire, but a knowledge of economics is considered unnecessary for most of us. The workers should leave this subject to the experts who will be sure to inform them when it is imperative that they refrain from wage claims, accept a lower standard of living, take up arms and so on. However, having a naive distrust of such experts, I recently attempted to correct this deficiency in my education by reading *An Introduction to Economics*.

The authors are economics teachers at Chichester High School and their book is intended primarily for secondary school-children taking their "O" level in this subject. The tone of the first few pages is certainly encouraging:

In economics we must always be scrupulously careful about method. We must begin by collecting all the relevant facts that are obtainable, analyse them carefully and then, and only then, try to draw our conclusions. We may not like our conclusions, they may be very uncomfortable ones, but if our study has been correct they will provide the only

sure guides to the working of our economic organism.

Certainly we would not quarrel with this but, unfortunately, these brave words soon evaporate and the rest of the book is composed of the most shoddy analysis and glib conclusions that would not give any capitalist a moment's indigestion.

The broad picture sketched of present day society is one of rosy affluence where the entire community benefits from its co-ordinated efforts. Although it is stated that the two factors of production are Labour and Capital, it is never explained that this capital is controlled by a minority who have no need themselves to work, whereas the vast majority of the population is faced with no alternative but to sell its labouring power as wage labour. Constant stress is placed on the tenet that capital is at the service of the whole community, who control it jointly. Despite the fact that most of the children who read this book will be members of the proletariat, unjustified use of the first person plural invariably accompanies the mention of capital.

For example:

Whenever any goods are produced we can choose two ways of using them—we can use them either to satisfy our wants directly or else we can put them on one side for future use. . . . In fact, there is often a considerable difference between the sort of goods which we consume and those we set aside. A great deal of the latter type consists of such things as industrial buildings and machinery. In other words some of the product is designed to add to our stock of capital, and some is designed for consumption. (our italics)

Now and again, however, a glimmer of

NEW ZEALAND LETTER

I recently read a press report on the new BMA booklet *Doctors' Orders*.

We in New Zealand have been getting this sort of thing thrown at us for about two or three years. The BMA are only handing these books out in order to get the workers to keep themselves fit for more intensive exploitation.

Think how the military authorities must groan in despair at the number of men who are not in fighting condition at commencement of training! The expense involved in bringing them up to a peak of fitness required for cannon fodder!

The BMA's little booklet should enable the workers to do their own P.T. at less cost to the master class. Our experience in Australasia has been that as soon as the masters knew they had a good reserve of healthy labour, they increased the pressure on the workers.

truth—which might induce an intelligent youngster to question some of the authors' other assertions—can be discerned. Thus, in a section dealing with the decline in competition, they write that "the growth of large-scale production leads to the concentration of an increasing amount of the community's capital in the hands of relatively few firms." Clearly such a statement as this cannot easily be reconciled with the suggestion that we are involved in the manipulation and organisation of our capital.

...the criterion of economic efficiency must be the degree to which wants are satisfied out of the use of the available resources of a community." Because, under capitalism, production is geared to profit and not to the satisfaction of people's wants, the immediate reaction to this sentence is to conclude that it implies a criticism of capitalist society. But the poverty of these professional economists' thought is well illustrated by their later amplification of this point. "Economic efficiency can be defined as the ability to use the available labour and capital to give the most complete satisfaction of wants. . . ." Thus they demonstrate that all their ideas are hemmed in by the strait-jacket of bourgeois economics; they cannot stretch their imagination beyond the narrow horizon of capitalism. Clearly it never occurs to them that the anarchy of capitalist production breeds inefficiency and that to talk of efficiency in the context of capitalism is to contradict oneself.

It is interesting to note that no reference to Marx is made anywhere in this work although even Malthus is considered worthy of a fleeting comment. Some of

the writers' profundities seem to have been devised deliberately to promote misunderstanding. For example, in chapter 9 they maintain that "our income is the value of our product." If our income represented the value of our product, how could profit possibly be accounted for? They have conveniently overlooked the fact that surplus value, created by the wage-worker, is acquired by the capitalist because he purchases the former's labouring power.

In the final chapter a summary of the present situation is made:

There are no inherent weaknesses in the British economy . . . responsibility for the success or failure in solving Britain's economic problem rests squarely on the shoulders of Parliament. In this instance, Parliament's first job must be to instruct the community in the nature of the problem and its remedies.

They are incorrect on virtually every point they make. Britain's economy, like that of the rest of the capitalist world, is riddled with inherent contradictions which no amount of palliative treatment can cure. Only one solution is possible—the establishment of socialism by the working class. This task must be carried out by the proletariat itself; they cannot expect the parliament of the capitalist class to achieve it for them.

But the final comment must be left to the authors themselves. Having outlined the difficulties which they consider Britain is facing, they ask "If Britain's economic problem can be explained in this way why has it proved so intractable?" Why indeed?

J.C.

If you go to a "vocational guidance expert" and tell him your troubles (that you cannot adjust to this sort of thing) he will have the unconscionable gall to tell you that it is in your own attitude to society and life that the trouble lies, and that where there is "competition" of this sort you must simply learn to fight against it and "stick up for yourself."

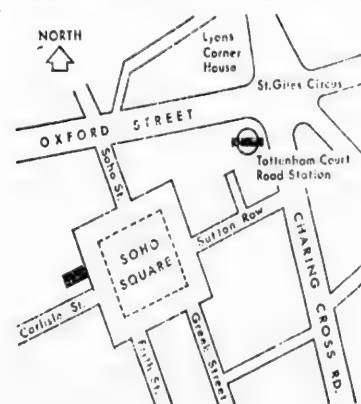
This, incidentally, is a favourite one with our psychiatrists, prison psychologists and Bible-bangers at the present time. In the meantime, those worthies are enjoying the best of privileges handed out to them by a grateful capitalist class who find it very convenient to have a large number of trained sophisticates taking care the workers do not get out of hand.

In spite of all the perennial rot they say about us having free speech, if a worker

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MEETINGS**BLOOMSBURY LECTURES**

Asquith Room, 2 Soho Sq. W1
Sundays, 8 pm (doors open 7.30 pm)



7th March
COMMUNICATIONS
Speaker: L. Dale

14th March
RUSSIA'S FUTURE COLONIAL PROBLEM
Speaker: E. Grant

21st March
RENTS AND RENT CONTROL
Speaker: J. D'Arcy

28th March
A VIEW OF THE CITY
Speaker: N. Stovold

GLASGOW PUBLIC MEETINGS
Woodside Public Halls
Sundays, 7.30 pm

7th March
THE GENERAL STRIKE

14th March
LABOUR GOVERNMENT OR SOCIALISM
Speaker: J. D'Arcy

21st March
THE PARIS COMMUNE

28th March
CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN

continued from previous page]

really gets up and has a go at them he is going to get slapped down pretty hard.

Only the Communists can get away with this "free speaking"; they are adept at saying nothing in several sentences and are in any case supporting the system.

I have not yet read the BMA's little book and I am not especially anxious to do so. When I hear that they have written a book describing the social conditions which give rise to, and help perpetuate, the majority of mental and bodily disorders, and suggesting the means whereby those conditions can be eradicated, then I will be eager to get my copy.

Christchurch, NZ.

E.W.H.

WELWYN MEETING

Community Centre
Mill Green Road, Welwyn Gd. City
Thursday, March 25th, 8 pm
ART AND SOCIALISM
General discussion to be opened by a member of the Group

OXFORD MEETING

Clarendon Press Institute
Walton Street, Oxford
Friday, 5th March, 8 pm
THE SOCIAL QUESTION
Speaker: D. Donaldson

ISLINGTON LECTURES

Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd., N7
Thursdays, 8 pm

11th March
SOCIALISTS AND RENT CONTROL
Speaker: J. D'Arcy

25th March
WHAT CAN A REVOLUTIONARY DO THESE DAYS?
Discussion opened by David Alexander (a political correspondent)

15th April
THE ARMS INDUSTRY
Speaker: J. Carter

LEWISHAM MEETINGS
Co-op Hall, Davenport Rd.
Rushey Green, Catford, SE6
Mondays, 8 pm

8th March
THE RUBBER INDUSTRY
Speaker: J. Carter

22nd March
THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
Speaker: D. Zucconi

BROMLEY DISCUSSION

New Hackwood Hotel
Widmore Road, Bromley
Wednesday, 31st March, 8 pm
LITERATURE IN SOCIETY

STEVENAGE MEETINGS
54 Sish Lane
Mondays, 8 pm

8th March
TRADE UNIONS

22nd March
MARXIAN ECONOMICS
Speaker: E. Hardy

NOTTINGHAM MEETINGS

1st Sunday in each month, 7.30 pm
Co-op Centre, Heathcoat Street
7th March
SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM
Speaker: E. Grant

PADDINGTON

The Royal Oak, York St., W1
(near Marylebone Station)
Wednesday, 9 pm

1st March
GEORGE ORWELL
Speaker: D. Donaldson

10th March
VANCE PACKARD
Speaker: S. Roope

31st March
HISTORY
Speaker: L. Dale

WEMBLEY LECTURES

Barham Old Court, Barham Park
(near Sudbury Town Station)
Mondays, 8 pm

1st March
THE ARMS INDUSTRY
Speaker: J. Carter

15th March
THEORY OF VALUE BEFORE MARX
Speaker: G. Maclatchie

29th March
SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM
Speaker: E. Grant

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays
Hyde Park, 3 pm
East Street, Walworth
March 7th and 28th (11 am)
March 14th (1 pm)
March 21st (noon)
Mondays
Lincolns Inn Fields, 1-2 pm
Thursdays
Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm

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“My country is the world”

APRIL 1965 | 6d

Vol 61 No 728

SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY Thursdays 8 pm, 1st and 15th April Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

BRADFORD & DISTRICT Correspondence: SPGB, Head Office, 52 Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 2nd April at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath (Tel. BEX 1950) and 16th April at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham SE9 (Tel. KIP 1796) Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 20 Clyde Street, Clydebank.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Neslon, above address.

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

MID HERTS Regular meetings at Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage. For details see meetings, and write: Ken Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. (Phone Hatfield 4802).

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

NOTTINGHAM 2nd Wednesday in month (14th April) 8 pm, Peoples Hall, Heathcoat Street. Correspondence: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesdays 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Thursdays 1st and 15th April Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-sea.

SWANSEA 1st and 3rd Monday (5th and 19th April) in month 8 pm, 68 Bryn Road (bottom flat). Correspondence to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowod, Llangyfelach, Swansea.

WEMBLEY Mondays 8 pm, Barham Old Court, Barham Park, near Sudbury Town Station, Wembley. Correspondence: R. G. Cain, 35 Waltham Rd., Southall, Middx.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (8th and 22nd April) in month 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (9th and 23rd April) in month 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Enquiries: M. Hopwood, St. Martins Rd., Ashton on Mersey, Sale. Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

REDHILL Enquiries: A. A. Kemp, 19 Ashcombe Road, Mersham, Redhill, Surrey.

SUNDERLAND Details of meetings from P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1) That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2) That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3) That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4) That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5) That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6) That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7) That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8) The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



The lesson of Vietnam

A recent statement made by U. Thant the Secretary-General to the United Nations, must come near to taking the prize for cynicism. Introducing his latest proposals for a negotiated settlement in Vietnam he stated: "I am sure that the great American people, if they only know the true facts, will agree with me that further bloodshed is unnecessary and that political and diplomatic negotiations alone can create conditions that will enable the United States to withdraw gracefully."

Such a remark may of course be naive, if it were not for the fact that people do not rise to world prominence in the savage world of international politics if they are that starry-eyed.

Needless to say the United States has not the slightest intention of withdrawing, gracefully or otherwise, from South Vietnam, anymore than China and Russia intend to cease intervention in the North. And the "Great American people", like the working class of other countries, will go on supporting their ruling class in this, and making the same excuses that they have done in the past.

One of the most tragic misfortunes that can befall a people today is to find themselves living in the no-mans-land between two great powers. To be in the path of the giants is often to be crushed underfoot, as the graveyards that sprawl over the hillsides of Korea show. This tragic fate has been the lot of Vietnam for many years now. The facts are easily accessible and there is no need for us to repeat them. And to the horror of open warfare must be added that of corrupt and vicious local government. American foreign policy, like that of other capitalist powers, sees nothing wrong in supporting nasty puppet governments, some of which look bad even against a background of international double-dealing. South Vietnam is no exception.

In addition to the normal reasons for capitalist powers hanging on to territory Vietnam, like Korea before it, has become a line of demarcation from which neither side dare withdraw, and which, they declare, will be held at all cost.

It is now nearly twenty years since the second world war ended and the world was plunged into "peace". During that time there have been a continual series of "police actions" and "internal problems" like Korea, Vietnam, Algeria, Hungary, Suez and a host of others. These incidents have not been glorified with the name of war and are supposed to have been in the interests of their victims; only the casualties are mounting into millions. If this pattern continues, and there is no reason to suppose that it will not, the horrors of peace will soon outstrip the horrors of war. Meanwhile the statesmen dither, they make speeches, they make journeys. They confer. These activities, we are told, are going to bring peace sometime or other.

"Peace" often means that the warring powers conclude they are spending too much on a comparatively minor conflict and decide to call a halt. The statesmen forget that they ever adopted apparently intransigent attitudes. They lie off to some well-publicised spot and there put their signatures to what they call a peace treaty.

This may suppress a particular conflict. But the bigger clash of interests, which is inevitable as long as capitalism lasts, is untouched. Not war, nor so-called peace, will abolish the problems of international conflict.

That can come about only by a fundamental change which by altering the basis of society will wipe out the evils which capitalism brings in its train. The lesson of Vietnam is the same as ever. Only Socialism can bring a world of peace and plenty.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London. S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee, should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

"My country is the world"

*I vow to thee, my country—all earthly things above
Entire and whole and perfect the service of my love.*
(Sir Cecil Spring-Rice; 1859-1918)

NOBODY who has been to school can have escaped the regular doses of patriotism which are administered there. The sentiments of Spring-Rice's hymn—which is sung at many a school assembly—are widely accepted, in some form or other.

For example, all capitalist political parties agree that there are some things on which the shadow boxing has to stop; one of these is patriotism. Whatever slant each of them may put on it, they are all agreed that everyone should be proud of his nationality and should work for what they call the interests of his country. In the last general election the Conservatives said in their manifesto that they aimed to "... gain the vitality to keep our country great." The Liberals lamented the fact that "Britain has lagged behind since the war..." The Labour Party promised to "... rekindle an authentic patriotic faith in our future..."

This general agreement also means that anybody who questions the values and the reason of patriotism is often regarded as a little odd, mentally undernourished, somebody who has got the world out of perspective. Yet all facts and reasonable argument show up patriotism for an empty sham, a propaganda weapon which is used to persuade people to do things against their own interests and to obscure where their interests actually lie.

Patriotism is adaptable. It can be stretched to include a number of countries which have united—or which have been united by another power—and which previously had their own, separate patriotism. Thus when Germany became united in the 19th century there had to be created a German patriotism, to include and dominate those of the states which had been unified. In the same way the leaders of the new states in Africa are trying to create patriotism out of a mixture—and often a clash—of tribal loyalties. They are trying to instil into the people of their countries a pride in being a "Kenyan", or a "Ghanian", or a "Zambian" worker; a respect for the country's flag, its National Anthem and a love of country to work, fight and die for.

The speeches of these leaders throb with patriotism. Last January, President Kaunda of Zambia promised military measures to "... protect our country and preserve our national identity." When Kenya became what was called a one-party democracy last November, Mr. Ngala, leader of the swallowed up Kenya African Democratic Union, said that he had disbanded his party because "... we consider the cause of Kenya to be greater than any of our personal pride, gains or losses."

There is a certain bitter irony in this. For it is in the new countries that people should have learnt of the dangers of patriotism. The native peoples of Africa should have learnt this, in the days when they were invaded, carved up and suppressed by the super-patriotic Empire Builders of North West Europe. The same lesson should have been absorbed by the people of India, Pakistan and the new Far Eastern States—and by the people of Israel, many of whom have had their own personal experience of the logical end of patriotism, in the concentration camps of pre-war Germany.

Just as patriotism can be extended to embrace a number of united nations, so it can be contracted when a country is divided. The East German government, for example, works to keep Germany permanently split and to foster an East German patriotism. The guards on the Berlin Wall are

encouraged to forget what they were once told about German nationality, and to shoot any of their fellow Germans who try to slip over to the West. In the same way, the North Koreans are now encouraged to treat the people in the South as their enemies; the same thing applies in the war which is going on in Vietnam.

Patriotism needs to be adaptable, yet in essence it should be inflexible and dogmatic. It was Stephen Decatur, in a speech in Virginia in 1816, who gave the famous toast—"... our country, right or wrong," which does not allow for any modification. The unquestioning acceptance of patriotism has made men endure exceptional horrors, it has persuaded them to accept the most degrading of indignities, and to impose the harshest of brutalities upon others. The men in the trenches in 1914/18 suffered the mud and shellfire and the slaughter in the cause of country. The Nazis cut their swath of death and fear across Europe under the inspiration of their patriotism. The men who set fire to Dresden, and who killed Hiroshima, were acting under the same impulses—and the same delusion.

Here again we have an example of the way in which the proponents of patriotism cynically vary their attitude as it suits their purpose. The Allied bomber crews who wiped out the refugees in Dresden were doing what is called their patriotic duty—they were obeying an order, without doubt or question. Yet this is exactly what most of the men who have stood trial in the war crimes courts did. These men have not, of course, been charged with offences against their country; they have been prosecuted for what have been called crimes against humanity. Thus, although the victor countries of the last war insist that their own soldiers should obey orders because it was patriotic to do so, they also insist that German soldiers should have refused to obey their orders in the interests of humanity. They ignore the fact that, to be consistent, patriotism should swamp humanity.

What sort of arguments are used to support patriotism? One that is popularly accepted, especially in wartime, is that it is something to do with a country's scenery. The official propaganda of 1939/45 encouraged us to join up, eat less, save more, by showing us pictures of placid villages, rolling downland, welcoming white cliffs. Anyone who lived through that war can remember the Ink Spots vocal group adding to this propaganda (and presumably to their bank balance) by crooning about an old cottage in a peaceful valley of corn, ending up with the song's message, and its title—*This Is Worth Fighting For*.

There are three things to say about this. The first is that all countries have their beauty spots and that if it was right for an Englishman to go to war because of the Sussex Downs then it was equally right for a German to fight because of the Black Forest, or an Italian because of the architecture of Ancient Rome.

The second thing is that a lot of the scenic beauty of this country has been destroyed since 1945; not by conquering Germans but by the enemy which is always there, in peace and war. It is the profit motive of capitalism which tore up enormous areas of countryside for opencast coal mining. It is the same motive which has been responsible for, among other things, the outrages of the big airports, for the housing sprawl into places which not so long ago were green and pleasant, for the high voltage power grid which is now threatening to violate the South Downs. The National Trust estimates that at least five miles of outstandingly beautiful coastline is each year being spoilt by property developers, who see the chance to make big profits as untouched bays and headlands are

opened up by new roads and motorways.

The third thing is that, even though there is a lot of beautiful scenery in this country, the vast majority of people have little chance to enjoy it. Most of us have to work for our living, which means that we spend all day, almost every day, in the heat and noise of a factory or the monotony of an office. Or perhaps we are salesmen, frantically chasing orders. However we get our living, it absorbs the bulk of our time and leaves only the fag end of it for any other activities. And when work is done we go back to the cheap poky place we call home. Millions of us go back to slums, which after all are as typical of a country as its rural scenery. (One First World War writer thought that the trenches were better places to live in than the slums that thousands of soldiers had left to go to war.) But no patriotic posters ever showed the Gorbals or Salford, and somehow these places got left out of the Ink Spots' records.

This, in a way at least, is consistent. The basis of patriotism is pride. No matter what their economic conditions may be—even if they live in a slum or are chronically out of work—patriots are proud of their nationality. British patriots are proud of being British, and do not bother themselves with wondering whether the impoverished peasant in Vietnam is proud of being Vietnamese. In the last war, the same sort of person thought that any decent German should have been ashamed of his nationality. Patriotism is always supposed to work in only one direction.

But anyone who is proud of being British should ask himself whether he takes pride in everything for which this country has been responsible. Is he proud of the fortunes which were built up in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and which erected many of the stately homes which we are supposed to include in our national heritage, from the proceeds of slave running and piracy? Does he take pride in the pitiless hardships of the enclosures and the evictions in Ireland, in the savage exploitations of the Industrial Revolution?

The list is a long one. The conquering of India. The penal settlements in Australia. The blatant attempts to crush the young Boer Republic. Suez. And the end has not been reached. The depredations committed by the British ruling

class, and by those of other countries, crowd the pages of history and continue to make the story of capitalist conflict. There is nothing in any of them for anyone to be proud of.

In fact, pride is completely out of place in relation to nationality. We are entitled to feel proud about something which we have achieved, but things which are beyond our control should not be matters for pride. We are not proud about the weather, nor about the fact that we were born at a particular time. In the same way, nobody should be proud because he happens to have been born in such a way that he can call himself British, or German, or any other nationality.

The short, simple fact is that patriotism and logic do not mix. Perhaps that is why patriotic fervour is so often so belligerently expressed, and why it can so easily lead to the extremes of racial intolerance, to the theories about a "Master Race" and to the "Final Solution" which is not final, which has nothing to do with any problem, but which is modern barbarity run wild.

This is the grimmer side of patriotism. A more popular one is that of a Blimpish nostalgia for the hazy days of Omdurman and the North West Frontier. It is common, now, for so-called progressive thinkers to poke fun at this, forgetting that under the skin the modern satirist is as patriotic as any choleric Victorian colonel.

No satirist ever hit on the basic tragedy of the thing, which is that patriotism debases a perfectly laudable motive. There is nothing wrong with the notion that the interests of a group are greater than those of any individual in it. Patriotism prostitutes this by restricting the size of the group into small parts of the human race and by bolstering itself with false ideas of superiority which in the end work against the interests of the whole.

Social progress depends upon the denial of patriotism. The majority of people in the modern world are members of the working class whose problems and interests are not confined within national barriers. These people have no country, no national interests; patriotism is poison to them. What they do have is a brotherhood with workers in other countries, which unites them in the need to establish a world of freedom. Thomas Paine once wrote, "My country is the world," and that is not a bad way of putting it.

IVAN.

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What are your wages?

Do you suffer from that common ailment: too much week left at the end of your money? Most of us do. The doctors, the teachers, the shipworkers, the provincial busmen and many others are all struggling, at the moment of writing, for higher wages. In a few weeks' time other workers in other jobs will be engaged in the same sort of tussle. As a matter of fact, we have become used to this pattern, since the war, of "rounds" of wage increases. The economy of this country has been "booming" fairly steadily, and unemployment keeps fairly low. But it is rather a strange fact that, in spite of all the increases that have been won in that time, our wages are still inadequate. There is plenty of evidence of this. The fact that the hire purchase debt in Britain passed the £1,000 million mark in 1964 shows just how much people can *not* buy without getting into debt.

Why is it that this struggle for higher wages is always going on, even in countries like the U.S.A. where workers are the highest paid in the world?

It isn't for the money, most of us would stop work tomorrow. After all, wages are the common means of getting work out of men and women. You can hear some of them call it "bloody slavery." They are not trying to be accurate—only to express their feelings. There is very little real slavery in the world today. It is a very old-fashioned and inefficient system of getting work out of people. The big empires of the past were built up on slave labour; and there was a brief flare-up of it again in America when the virgin land of the new continent was being opened up to agriculture. The slave was caught or bought, like a horse or a machine; and was fed or flogged when necessary in order to get the maximum of work out of him. Slaves were not really regarded as people: they were denied citizenship; and their owners usually had power of life and death over them. But the quality of work they could do was generally very low; and there is a snag to owning slaves: they have to be fed and housed even when there is no work for them to do.

Although there has always been a certain amount of it, getting work out of people by wages is fairly new as a universal system. Almost everywhere in the world the slave empires were overthrown by the much less highly organised system of feudalism. The feudal serf was a "free" man owning his own bit of land; but to protect themselves from attack serfs clustered round the strong-arm men, the lords of the manor; and they paid for their "protection" by working on the land or fighting the battles of their lords. In the time that was left over, they were able to work their own strips of land. A tenth of even this that they produced was demanded from them by a highly organised church, which operated in league with the lords to prevent serfs from running away. It is debatable, therefore, whether serfs were much better off than slaves.

With the rise of capitalism, however, the serfs were gradually freed entirely—by having even their strips of land taken off them. They were no longer forced to work for anybody—except by the pressure of starvation. As it was, they offered themselves for work eagerly, even desperately at times, for there was no other way of getting food, clothing and shelter, except by wages. At last, in capitalism, the system of buying and selling became universal. Everything was for sale. Anything could be bought. The problem for the great mass of humanity was that they had nothing left to sell except their ability to work.

Most of us feel we have the right to live. The trouble is that hardly any of us have got "private means." We can only

get the means to live by "selling ourselves." It is rather like prostitution; but we have no choice. Because of this, a lot of workers talk about the "right to work" almost as though it were the same thing as the right to live. They take part in marches and demonstrations when jobs are scarce, insisting upon their right to work. They feel offended if they are told that they are demanding the right to prostitute themselves. Actually, of course, workers have no legal right to work. Nor will they ever have. All they possess is a commodity—the *ability* to work. Millions of people throughout the world own nothing else.

This is what distinguishes them as a separate economic class, the working class. They constitute about ninety per cent of the civilized population of the world. Of course, in the more advanced countries they may own their own house and their own car; but economically their class is determined by the fact that they have to prostitute themselves throughout their useful lives in order to keep these things and to live from day to day.

Obviously, if workers are sellers of the ability to work, there must also be a class of buyers. Occasionally and briefly, one worker may buy the services of another to do a job; but as he only has his wages with which to pay wages it cannot be general. Only those who possess the wealth which can be worked upon to produce more wealth, can really afford to pay wages. But why should anyone want to hire us—especially if they already have the wealth, and we have none? Why should anyone pay us wages for the use of our mental and physical energy? There can only be one reason: to increase their wealth further by our work. And not only that: to increase it by more than the cost of our wages.

Wealth used in this way to make more wealth is called capital; and those who use it in this way are called capitalists. So the bulk of humanity is divided into two classes: sellers and buyers of labour power; workers and capitalists.

So wages are really the price paid for our ability to work. The very existence of wages proves the division into classes, wherever it is found. Every week or every month our pay packet or our cheque reminds us of the fact that we belong to the class which can only secure the right to live by offering ourselves for work, by prostituting ourselves to those who find it convenient to buy their abilities—the world's capitalists.

Such a situation inevitably produces conflict. In buying and selling, the seller always tries to raise the price, while the buyer tries to reduce it. There is no let-up. And the very point of conflict is the wage packet itself. The quickest and surest way for the capitalist to increase his profit is by cutting wages. And yet the worker's wage is his only means of living, so that he has no choice but to struggle—not only to raise his wages, but to prevent them being depressed.

A Fair Day's Pay.

There were times in the nineteenth century when some wages for adult men with families were as low as sixpence a week; and it meant, of course, that the women and children were forced out to work as well to keep alive. All this is gone now—at least, in Britain. Similar things are still found in the newly capitalist countries, and in places like Hong Kong; even, surprisingly enough, in the U.S.A. But here, for the last few years, the talk has all been of "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." Harold Wilson has been the most recent public figure to use it, in a demand for greater efforts

from the working class of Britain. By this, he identifies himself with all other politicians, whether they claim to represent the working class or not, because it is a slogan used purely on behalf of the capitalist class.

There is really nothing "fair" about the wages system at all. It is always loaded overwhelmingly in the capitalists' favour. Although they often do *increase* their profit by fighting off wage demands, this is not the main method of making profit. Capital finds it profitable to employ labour even when wages are not depressed. And this is generally the case in Britain today. Wages are inadequate, of course, but they are relatively about the highest that they have ever been.

How, then, does the capitalist make profits? Purely by using the wages system. Actually, the wages swindle is very simple, but very effective. And, what is more, it is perfectly legal. If you can get hold of enough capital, you can start operating it tomorrow—if you can get hold of enough capital.

This is the way it works: the capitalist simply hires a man's *abilities* for the day, or the week, or the month; and then he gets as much *work* out of him as he possibly can during that time. Now, ever since the dawn of civilization it has been possible for a man to produce more than he needed for his own keep. That is what made slavery a possibility in the first place. And, since factory organization, and then mechanization, and now even automation, the possibilities have risen. But the capitalist does not pay for the actual value that the man adds to the raw materials by working on them. All that he pays for is the man's keep. Loosely speaking the worker may have produced enough by Monday or Tuesday, to pay for his keep; but the capitalist keeps him turning out wealth until Friday, simply because he has bought the worker's labour power for that period.

If the workers complain that this system is not fair at all, it is easy to point out to them that this is a buying and selling arrangement. They have something to sell: their ability to work. And the capitalist is prepared to buy it. Profit is simply the difference between a man's wages and the value of what he actually produces. All this vague trade union talk about the workers having a right to a share in the profits simply shows a total lack of understanding of what profits are and what wages are. The workers have no right to a share in the profits at all, in the capitalist system.

How Much Are You Worth?

There is no direct connection at all, then, between the amount that a man produces and the size of his wage packet. Neither is there any real connection between his wages and how hard he works. This is often difficult to see because of the piece-work systems, bonus schemes, and high overtime rates, all of which make it look as though the harder you work, the more money you make. If there really was such a connection, it would mean that Dr. Beeching, with his salary of £25,000 from British Railways, was working about thirty times as hard every day as the average factory worker—quite impossible.

By the time that most of us get home after a day's work, we are pretty well exhausted. It takes a real effort to get washed and changed to go out to the cinema or the pub. And now that television has brought the cinema to us, millions of us are content to sit in an armchair for three hours and then go to bed. We have put out, during the day, all the physical, emotional and mental energy we are capable of, without run-

ning ourselves down into illness. Even this happens fairly often with many people.

So we have done our fair day's work; and we have got our fair day's pay. And there is a direct connection between them. This commodity that we have to sell—our ability to work—is used up at the end of the day. We have sold it. And it costs money to renew it—money to keep up a certain standard of food, clothing, shelter and recreation to make us able to face another day, or another Monday morning. What is more, we were reared with a certain amount of care in the first place, educated at a certain cost, and probably trained, too.

All of this makes up the true cost of production of our commodity—the ability to do a certain type of work. This is what our wages pay for—the cost of producing our labour power. This is all that is ever meant by "a fair day's pay"—enough for us to keep on producing the ability to work for the capitalist class, throughout our lives, until our commodity loses most of its worth through old age. It has also paid for the cost of producing children to provide another army of wage-slaves to take our places when we are gone.

The wages system has proved so successful that it has spread to all the major countries of the world, and is still spreading. And, in between the wars and slumps that it causes, it works like a charm. The surplus that the workers produce is largely used to buy more machinery and plant and materials to extract more surplus from their efforts, and to bring more peasants and primitives in "undeveloped areas" into the system. The new machines produced by workers in one industry serve to step up the amount of profit made out of workers in another. The buildings and plant set up by one generation are there to extract surplus value from the next.

All the time, and all over the world, the workers are building up more and more wealth—none of which belongs to them. By their very work they deprive themselves more and more of the wealth which is in the world, and so set the capitalist class higher and higher above them, with greater and greater powers of oppression.

And most workers accept this system of legalized robbery. (It is only legal because capitalists made the laws). They accept it every time they press for their "right to work." They accept it when they talk of "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work," and when they think that "co-operation between both sides of industry" is a good thing, they are showing their approval of being robbed.

Of course, they are brainwashed into accepting it. They don't realise that they can abolish the wages system. They are usually so relieved and glad to get their pay packet or their cheque, when it finally comes, that they forget they are holding in their hands the proof that they have been taken for suckers once again in the biggest swindle of all time.

What are your wages?

S. STAFFORD.

ANNUAL DANCE AND REUNION

The Conference Dance will be held as usual on Easter Saturday at Conway Hall. This is a most enjoyable evening with a good band and plenty of refreshments. It also enables members to meet one another and get acquainted with sympathisers. Tickets are only 3/6. and I hope that we shall have a good attendance.

CENTRAL ORGANISER.

The "Welfare" State

It is sometimes claimed that the case for socialism is now no longer relevant as capitalism has managed to reform itself through such means as universal education and factory and welfare legislation. The underlying assumption behind such claims is that socialists hold that under capitalism the owning class can only be a bunch of rapacious and selfish despots holding sway over a wretched mass of labourers who live in utter destitution amid filth and squalor. This was something like the position in the period between the rapid growth of capitalism in Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the time when the governing classes—then landlord and capitalist—got round to tackling the situation in the interests of the further development of capitalism.

The socialist analysis of the so-called Welfare State goes back to the pioneer of scientific socialism, Karl Marx himself. *Capital* appeared in 1867. By that time the institutions of the Welfare State were not very advanced. In *Victorian Origins of the British Welfare State* D. Roberts describes their growth in the period 1833-1854. The Parliament elected after the passing of the first Reform Act of 1832 had to deal with the various social problems which the Industrial Revolution had aggravated: growing rural pauperism, the sad state of education, the utter squalor of prisons and the working class areas of towns, the employment of women and children for long hours in the factories and mines. During this period government inspectors were appointed for factories, schools, health, prisons, mines and railways; the Poor Law and church systems were reorganised. The first Factory Act was passed in 1812; state aid to education was also first given in 1833; the first Mines Act was in 1842; the Public Health Act was passed in 1848 and housing was first regulated by an Act of 1851. By the 1850's the governing classes had overcome their prejudices against State intervention for social reform.

Social reform came to be accepted as a necessity as conditions changed. This then was the extent of the Welfare State during the period of capitalism about which Marx wrote. Besides the employment of women and children and besides the filth and squalor in which the working class then existed Marx also described, as he says in his preface, "the history, the details and the results of English factory legislation." Drawing an analogy with soil preservation Marx pointed out that the various Factory Acts "curb the passion for a limitless draining of labour power, by forcibly limiting the working day by state regulations, made by a state that is ruled by capitalist and landlord." His conclusion could not be clearer: factory legislation, he wrote, was "just as much the necessary product of modern industry as cotton-yarn, self-actors and the electric telegraph."

From about 1870 onwards the various social reforms were consolidated in a number of measures: the Education Act of 1870, the Public Health Act of 1875, the Artisans' Dwelling Act of 1875, the Mining Act of 1877 and the Factory Act of 1878. In this period also the law on trade unions was reformed. A Workmen's Compensation Act was passed in 1897. Old Age pensions were first paid in 1909 and the National Insurance Act of 1911 introduced unemployment and sickness insurance for the first time. It was during this period that the SPGB was formed and the backnumbers of this journal contain a very useful analysis of these schemes. The issue for May 1914 explained their character very clearly:

Collective capital is expended through Government departments, with the object of placing at the disposal of individual capitalists an improved commodity on the labour market—

workers whose labour will bear richer fruit in the shape of surplus value.

By this time reforms of all sorts were passed by every government whatever its political complexion. The government had now assumed the task of seeing that institutional and administrative arrangements kept pace with industrial changes. In 1925 the pensions scheme was made contributory. A number of Acts—Addison, Chamberlain, Wheatly—were passed granting housing subsidies and allowing slum clearances in the period between the wars. Poor Law assistance was however still administered locally. In 1942 appeared the famous Beveridge Report. Beveridge examined the various welfare services and advocated many changes in the interests of efficiency. The proposal which received the most publicity was that for a national minimum income below which no one should fall, i.e., the transfer of poor relief to the central government. In a pamphlet issued at the time, *Beveridge Re-Organizes Poverty*, the SPGB pointed out that the Beveridge proposals

will level the workers' position as a whole, reducing the more favourably placed to a lower level and putting the worst placed on a less evil level. This is not a "new world" of hope, but a re-distribution of misery.

After the war many of Beveridge's proposals were implemented: a National Assistance Board was set up to ameliorate destitution and the chaotic hospital system was co-ordinated into the National Health Service. The much-vaunted Welfare State was complete.

Modern capitalism demands that the State spend capital on maintaining and improving the wealth—and profit—producing capacities of the working class. The NHS, the State education system and even the NAB are State capitalist organisations which work with labour power as their raw material. Although expenditure on such services is an economic necessity under modern capitalism it is not suggested that the relationship between the economy and the Welfare State is direct and mechanical. As a matter of history the present structure of the welfare services is the product of political struggles of varying intensity for over a hundred years. A great deal of idealism and devotion as well as a great deal of calculated self-interest has gone into all the campaign for education, factory and welfare measures under capitalism.

And indeed some aspects of the health and physical environment of the working class have improved considerably: infant mortality has been cut, some killer diseases eradicated, housing and factory conditions bettered. On the other hand, as well as putting more into the worker, capitalism has demanded more out of him more intense work as well as the faster pace of life generally. Aneurin Bevan used to refer to the NHS as "pure socialism" as it gave people free access to medical treatment. However there is nothing to be gained from seeing welfare services as something which they are not. They do not give the worker something for nothing. They are not free handouts.

Reforms—social, economic and political—are necessary all the time to keep the capitalist system running smoothly. They do not represent a challenge to the system or a concession from the system, rather are they demanded by the system. All such reforms, in education and welfare, have left the working class propertyless and non-owners of the means of production. They do not challenge the basis of the capitalist system which is this non-ownership of the means of production by the work-

ing class. Poverty is the negation of ownership. Thus the working class still live in poverty.

Today, proposals for the reform of the welfare services are once again being mooted. Douglas Houghton, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the present government, has been given the responsibility of reforming these services. Like Beveridge he has the task of reorganising poverty, that is, of seeing that expenditure on the welfare services is spent as effectively as possible from the point of view of the productive efficiency of the working class: no one must get too much and no one must get too little. He also has the task of working out more efficient ways of dealing with those whose labour

Capitalism and work

UNDER Socialism the entire means and techniques that man has developed for producing wealth will become the common property of the whole community. The whole of man's heritage as a tool making innovator handed down from flint stone axe to electronic cybernetics will be unreservedly taken over by the whole community for the satisfaction of its material needs. This condition by itself pre-supposes democratic control and social equality within all aspects of world wide production. Socialism will reconcile the harvesting of what the community needs with the assertion of individuality through work. Thus men will not perform work by selling their labour on the labour market for a wage or salary. Work will be the means by which men will express their individuality within the community. Socialism means co-operation, with the individual determining his contribution to society through all his diverse skills and aptitudes.

No proposition is more likely to inflame the prejudices of defenders of the wage labour system than the demand for "... a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common." These prejudices take the form of a variety of objections frequently voiced at Socialist public meetings. Part of this prejudice is that men, by their nature, are lazy and have a natural repugnance for work. That production is only ever possible at all when men are forced to engage in work activity by bringing pressures to bear on them. The defenders of commercial interests and the indignities of wage labour claim that men will only work under the inducement of money incentives and when laziness is penalised by the worker being cut off from a livelihood.

It is often argued that man's "natural laziness" rules out as impracticable any revolutionary demand for a society free from commercialism, the profit motive, class divided society, and the social coercions of wage labour. This objection is a hollow prejudice that seeks to impose a quite false and perverted limitation on humanity's social possibilities. In order to explain the prejudice itself and why, within Capitalist society, work itself is brought into disrepute, it is necessary to place the whole question of work within modern society into its true social perspective.

The framework within which work is performed in Capitalist society is comprised of the fact that wealth is produced and distributed through the buying and selling of commodities. A small section of the population monopolise and

power is either worn out or of such low quality as to be useless: those who used to be called the "aged poor" and others who live in destitution pure and simple.

The working class should not be interested in reorganising poverty. Their aim should be to end the present degrading status of those who work. Under capitalism the producers are treated as mere productive instruments. This is a necessary consequence of the ownership of the means of life by a minority, which means that the producers are propertyless, owning nothing but labour power. Only under socialism where all will have free access to the means of life will people be able to live and treat each other as human beings.

A.L.B.

control the means of production, the factories, mines, transport etc., and this monopoly of the means of life is used by them to extract a commercial profit from social production. From this economic basis two inescapable facts of every day life emerge. Firstly, the work performed by any category of worker, whether he be labourer, craftsman technician or professional, enhances the privileged position of a social minority: the profit that accrues to this minority class takes precedence over general community needs. Secondly, the only access to a living open to any category of worker who contributes through his work to production and distribution is by selling his mental or physical capacities for wages or a salary to his employer.

Capitalist production rests upon involving those who contribute to production in subservience and economic exploitation. Exploitation is an inevitable corollary of work in a commercial society. Work in these circumstances cannot be the fulfillment of the worker's interests through his creative efforts, but its direct opposite, the activity by which his exploited status is maintained. The ends to which his work efforts are directed are alien to his interests as an individual and alien to the interests of the working class as a class. Work under Capitalism means selling labour power in a labour market, but in the conditions of day to day reality it is impossible to abstract the power to work from the personality of the man working. Commercialised labour involves the commercialisation of humanity itself.

Under Socialism the fact that work will be the means whereby the individual will assert himself within society through creative activity will in itself characterise the nature of social production. The expression of individual talent will not be stultified by the crushing economic factors that operate in present day society, where the object of production is for sale at a profit. The organisation of the labour force under Capitalism is determined by stringent economic factors which are both commercial and military; it is geared to the profit motive and the military defence of the profit motive. From the viewpoint of catering for actual material needs a vast wastage of labour takes place under Capitalism. The functions of Advertising, Insurance, Banking, the Law, Invoicing, Costing, Supervising, Receipting, the Armed Forces, the Armaments Industry are all examples. This is not an organisation of Society's resources adjusted to human needs but is one adjusted to social ends that are alien to human needs and

which would under Socialism become redundant.

Under Capitalism then, work becomes an activity imposed on the worker by forces external to himself. It is the division of labour in the cause of profit that imposes itself on the worker and forces him to comply with its requirements. Men become the adjuncts of machines, servants of the "belt system": workers engage in work that is physically and mentally destructive and which involves a life time of personal frustration. Workers under Capitalism must compromise their individuality, must tell lies and perfect a multitude of deceitful techniques. Like the salesman, eternally cheerful under all circumstances, they must lead double lives, only becoming their true selves during their leisure time. Work in these circumstances cannot be a creative activity that enhances the worker's personal sense of fulfillment; it is the hall mark of his social inferiority and merely the means of reproducing his subsistence from week to week or month to month. Work is not an end in itself but a distasteful and repugnant means to another economic end.

The division of labour in Capitalist society not only places, in the name of work, a burden of economic duty on the working class, but debases work even further through the economic factors that condition it. A system geared to the marketing of commodities is pre-occupied with cheapness and saleability. The skills of the carpenter for instance are bent not to the flowering of his talents, but to speed, the saving of time, skimping of material, and the inferiority of the product in design and finish. The man who, in his leisure time, does carpentry for a hobby, in an atmosphere that is free from the requirements of speed and cheapness, would not dream of making an inferior joint whilst knowing that the more elaborate joint, consuming more time, was really necessary. He would regard such an economy as not only an abuse of the job in hand but an abuse of himself, a self-inflicted insult to his own skill. This double standard is common in many workers. As units of labour within commodity production they must act as economic categories and accept all the priorities of Capitalist economics, including speed and cheapness. It is only when they are outside money inducements and the economic necessity of reproducing their subsistence that they are able to take a pride in performing uncorrupted work.

Capitalism degrades work and makes impossible what William Morris called "The expression of man's joy through his labour." Marx himself saw work in a Capitalist context in the same light. "... The work is external to the worker, that is not part of his nature, that consequently he does not fulfill himself in his work but denies himself. ... His work is not voluntary but imposed, forced labour. It is not the satisfaction of a need but only a means for satisfying other needs. ... Finally, the alienated character of work appears in the fact that it is not his work but work for someone else, that in work he does not belong to himself but to another person." (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*.)

To ignore the social context in which work is performed and to raise man's "natural laziness" as an objection to Socialism is to crown ignorance and prejudice with distorted pessimism. Like any other social phenomena, the question of work can only be understood in relation to the whole social environment.

Under Socialism work will spring spontaneously from the individual himself, and the contribution that he makes through Society, in whatever field he chooses, will at once form the basis of social cohesion and at the same time endow his individual personality. The interests of the individual will be in harmony with the interests of the whole community.

This article has discussed work in relation to class structure and the division of labour. A further article will discuss the attitudes and values about work in modern property society.

P.I.

MAY DAY RALLIES SUNDAY 2nd MAY

LONDON

TRAFALGAR SQUARE, 3 pm

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST RALLY

GLASGOW

3 pm

QUEENS PARK RECREATION GROUND

7.45 pm

McCLELLAN GALLERIES

Sauchiehall Street

A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY

Speakers: C. May (London), J. Richmond

BIRMINGHAM

BULL RING, 3 pm

BRISTOL

DURDHAM DOWNS, 3 pm

MARKET SQUARE, 3 pm

NOTTINGHAM

RACE

The June issue of the Socialist Standard will be devoted to the Race Question.

THE PASSING SHOW

TV trash

How often do you wash your hair? How often do you have a bath? If someone (other than perhaps your doctor) asked you those questions, you'd probably tell him to mind his own business. Such matters are considered personal enough not to discuss them generally in public.

However, that's in the everyday run of affairs. But if there was money in it, you might well swallow your pride and tell the questioner what he wanted to know. And if the exercise were repeated often enough and lucratively enough, it's possible you would forget you were ever annoyed and would even offer other personal but just as worthless titbits, such as the number of times you blow your nose in a day. I could go further, but I won't.

Why am I mentioning this? It's just that one Friday evening a few weeks ago, I had the misfortune to sit through one hour of concentrated rubbish put out by I.T.V. under the title *Ready, Steady, Go*. As far as I could tell, it was a collection of pop groups and "singers" bleating, moaning, groaning and grimacing to the accompaniment of twanging guitars and the shouts of hysterical teenagers. Usually they merely mime to a background recording, but this time it was a "live" show, and having seen samples of both now, I'd say the more objectionable by a short head.

With Keith Fordyce as the compere trying hard to sound wildly enthusiastic over the nerve racking extremes of sixty minutes sheer row, and his assistant Kathy McGowan, calling everything "fab" and "gear", the high spot—or punch line if you prefer—came when the Rolling Stones appeared and their Mike Jagger answered puerile questions about his bathing and washing habits. At the end of the programme, such was the frenzy of his audience, that he was saved from being devoured only by the intervention of some strong arm men, no doubt retained for the occasion.

It would be stupid of course to blame television as such for trash like this—just as logical as blaming weapons for the outbreak of war. It would be putting the cart before the horse. Like so many things in this world, T.V. has a vast potential for benefiting mankind, but is twisted and debased to suit the needs of a profit making system of society. And this applies just as much to the staid old B.B.C. as it does to the cruder and brassier I.T.V. So if there is a vast teenage demand for Beatles, Animals, Jerks, Kinks, Pretty Boys and Rolling Stones, then T.V. has to sink to the occasion. No matter if some of the characters look like Rowton House rejects; their records sell, don't they? In their millions?

Indeed they do, and while that sort of condition obtains, all sorts of people will swallow whatever pride they may once have had, in the frantic race for the fast buck. A survey a few years back pointed out the size of the teenage market, running into hundreds of millions of pounds a year, something which certainly didn't exist before the war. So no wonder we have manufacturers sitting up and taking notice, making things specially for the "teenage character" and changing the styles at a bewildering speed to maintain the myth of teenage exclusiveness, trying to keep the youngsters sufficiently obsessed with themselves to bolster sales.

Gramophone records are no exception to this rule. Generally the pop recordings are of poor quality, and not intended to last. Teenage restlessness in the demand for "new" numbers and boredom with the old, will be encouraged by the

disc companies. It's good for turnover and sales, but reduces the level of performance to an all time low with each new group or record to appear. Hence the spectacle of *Ready, Steady, Go*, *Jukebox Jury* and others.

The tragedy of it all is that teenagers are so unaware of all this. They really do believe that they are "different" from the rest of us and that the current hullabaloo is merely a recognition of this at last. In fact their wage status in society guarantees their "sameness" with everyone else and places similar restrictions upon them. They are being taken for a long and bumpy ride with a rubbish tip at the end of it.

Doctors' dilemma

Not so long ago there was no National Health Service in Britain. You just had to scrape the money together to pay the doctor if you were unfortunate enough to need his services. And of course, a stay in hospital meant hospital bills, although how many workers managed to pay them is another matter.

The family doctor was often held in awe and reverence—a pillar of respectability, financially very comfortable and independent. That was obviously the impression that East End slum dwellers gained, perhaps because the doctor always wore a clean shirt and looked smartly turned out. They did not realise just how great a struggle some medicos had to get by, but the going must have been tough at times, particularly in the depressed areas. A. J. Cronin gives us a glimpse of this in some of his novels.

Well, whatever delusions we may have had about the G.P.'s status before the war, there is certainly no room for them now. Most of his "independence" was swept away when the post

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1965

Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. WC1

Friday 16th April

11 am—5 pm

7.30 pm, Rally: Socialism World Wide

Saturday 17th April

2.30—5 pm

7.30—11 pm Social and Dance

Sunday 18th April

11 am—5 pm

CONFERENCE RALLY

CONWAY HALL,

Red Lion Square, WC1

Friday 16th April, 7.30 pm

SOCIALISM, WORLD WIDE

Speakers:

Fenton (Fraternal delegate from USA)

Vanni (Glasgow)

Brain (Swansea)

war health service was set up, and doctors in general can be seen now for what they are—and always were—working men and women. True, their income on average is still much higher than many other workers, but what of that? There have always been differing grades of training and pay under capitalism and here is an example. Their training is years long and their working hours atrocious. A *Guardian* article of March 9th for example told of resident hospital doctors often working a hundred hours and more a week.

And just like other workers, the doctors have to battle with their employers (the government) over wages and conditions, which is really what all the rumpus was about a few weeks back. The British Medical Association—the doctors' "trade union"—threatened to withdraw its members from the health service if the government's pay offer was not improved. This was not a strike, it was claimed, although just what other name it could be given was not stated. However, the government seems to have climbed down and granted some at least of the doctors' demands. For them, however, the lesson of

organisation has been a long time in the learning. The assiduously cultivated image of medicine being a calling rather than a job, with its practitioners' sole aim to serve their patients, will be equally long a-dying; and this presents them with a dilemma.

To retain the all-important public support for their cause, the old picture is of help, but it can act as a double-edged weapon. The government has been quick to realise this and use it to the full in its negotiations with the B.M.A. As so many other workers have found, it is the strike or the very real threat of it, which gets things moving if they can be moved at all. And then bang goes public sympathy.

In the event, the medicos took the only course open to them and risked public hostility. Strikes are a constant feature of capitalist society—they are part of the fight which goes on all the time. And people usually get hurt in a fight, not just the direct participants but onlookers as well. It is one of the regrettable facts of capitalist life. End capitalism and you end the fight—for doctors as well as for the rest of us.

E.T.C.

NEWS IN REVIEW

Summerskill speaks

The indignation of Lady Summerskill was on public view recently when on television she accused the Tate Gallery of pandering to a "pseudo intellectual snobbery" when it paid £60,000 for a painting by Picasso which she claimed was "quite meaningless." The money, she claimed, would have been much better spent on a hospital or a new operating theatre.

We don't doubt that Lady Summerskill sincerely feels that she has lined up her social priorities in the right order, but then choices of this kind don't really have to be made. There is no reason why either art or hospitals should carry a price tag at all. Her indignation is diminished by the fact that she herself accepts the phoney economic limitations that Capitalism places on the provision of both these necessary facilities.

30 years after

The recent Royal visit to Ethiopia, which was front page news in the British Press for a few days, carried the mind back vividly, exactly 30 years, to the days when Abyssinia filled not only British but world newspapers. This was in 1935, when Italy launched its brutal war of conquest against this strange survival from the ancient world. The news of

bombing raids and poison-gas coming over the radio, provided a sickening curtain-raiser for the world-wide tragedy that was to follow.

For a year or more Abyssinia was the centre of passionate political debate, and the subject that dominated all street-corner meetings. It was the rallying point for the "Popular Fronters" until the Spanish Civil War pushed it back into the shadows. One can also recall the mass of misinformation, about Abyssinia, that poured from Communist and Fascist platforms alike—from speakers who one suspected, had only just heard of the place. Perhaps the crowning irony was the spectacle of the Emperor Haile Selassie, autocrat, with a system of government that made the late Tzar look like a revolutionary, becoming the idol of the Left and a champion of Liberty.

Can it be only 30 years since these events took place? The face of Africa has changed so rapidly in the last generation, that it is difficult to realise that Abyssinia was once the only independent state left in Africa, after the great European powers had carved up the continent. Mountainous and land locked, nobody particularly wanted it but Italy, desperate for glory to impress its proletariat, and for land to dump its surplus production.

Today Africa is covered with newly independent States, and it is those which are still under European control that make news. Capitalism is advancing, behind the rash of new flags, smashing

tribal economics in its path, and producing the pattern of life so familiar to us. Ethiopia, with Italy's old colony of Eritrea thrown in to give it a sea coast, has emerged as a kind of centre for the Pan-African movement, with Addis Ababa as an African Geneva.

Perhaps the greatest irony of all is the fact that the new African leaders, loud in their condemnation of Imperialism, are prepared to accept "His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie, King of Kings, Elect of God, and Conquering Lion of Judah," as one of themselves.

Wilson's chat

It was on the evening of 24th. February last that Mr. Harold Wilson, his silver hair carefully flattened into place, spoke to us all on television.

First, there was the little joke about Madame Tussauds, to prove that the Prime Minister is human. Then the smile, faint though it had been, vanished and Wilson piled into us.

We need, he said, a revolution (how many other politicians have said that, without actually meaning a revolution, nor perhaps even realising the import of the word?) in industrial techniques and national attitudes.

No more of the attitude that "what was good enough for grandfather is good enough for me." No more "strikes arising

from some real or imagined grievance."

No more "arguments about which of two men shall bore a hole in a sheet of metal... when"—and here Mr. Wilson's eye was level, his voice threatening—"waiting in the wings there are automatic hole borers whose designers have not programmed them to argue about demarcation disputes."

The Tories watched and studied this broadcast very carefully. If the Prime Minister had said a word out of place, if he had been in the slightest bit "controversial," the Opposition would have claimed the right to reply.

But Mr. Wilson cut the ground from under their feet. The Conservatives could find nothing in his broadcast to argue with. The reason for this is plain.

No employer, no Tory, would disagree with the Wilson strictures on strikes, industrial disputes, clock watching—even the sideswipe at expense account lunches. Indeed, some of them probably realised that Wilson attacked strikers much more effectively than the tweedy, remote fourteenth Earl could ever hope to.

In fact, Wilson ignored the minor differences between his party and the Conservatives and concentrated upon their grounds of fundamental agreement—upon their united support of the interests of the British capitalist class.

It is true that the broadcast gave the Tories one cause for concern. Wilson assiduously engaged himself that evening in building up the image of himself as what they call a national leader and therefore was, perhaps, winning votes from those workers who like to have a Big Brother at the head of their master class.

This is an apt comment on the standing of the Labour Party today. They have come a long way since the times when they professed to stand for the interests of the working class and in Harold Wilson they have found the man to bring them to the inevitable end of their journey. For now they are openly a national party of British capitalism, trying to boost British technology, British exports, British influence—with no more nonsense about the class struggle.

Wilson himself made the point when he went for "... men pinching a few minutes here, an hour there..." The significance of this is that men can only "pinch" time from their employer because they have already sold it to him—because they have sold to him their working ability, measured in minutes and hours.

But this only happens in a social system in which the majority of people are compelled to sell their working ability to live—it can only happen, in other words, under capitalism.

So what Wilson was saying was that, under Labour government, capitalism is still here. A pity he did not say so. But men who aspire to be "National leaders" can rarely afford to be frank.

Into Europe?

Anyone who has his nose to the ground cannot have failed recently to detect a familiar scent.

The British capitalist class is once more showing interest in joining the European Common Market.

Sir Alec Douglas-Home, addressing the Young Conservatives last February, spoke of cementing "an agreement with Europe... economic and political and in due course it will cover security..."

Mr. Wilson, while outwardly he cannot so quickly discard his anti-European hat, is showing signs that he is attracted by its opposite. If he decides to wear this particular hat there will be, of course, no heartburning as a result of yet another abandonment of what were once presented as inviolable principles.

Foreign Secretary Mr. Michael Stewart has recently said that Europe should be "... an equal and influential member of the Atlantic partnership."

These friendly noises could mean that the British capitalist class are once more seeking other ways out of their immediate difficulties than national and Commonwealth ones. In this, of course, their hopes are illusory; the Common Market has not solved the economic problems of its members.

If Britain does try again to join Europe, there will follow the old battle between those interests (agriculture, for example) which see their economic fortunes safest in a massive tariff wall against foreign competition and those (motor cars, for example) whose mouths water at the prospect of penetrating the European market on tariff terms equal to the German and French industries.

Then there is the brooding figure of de Gaulle, who has fashioned French policy on the resolve to build a Europe independent, as far as it can be, of American influence, with France as the dominant power. This policy has no place, at present, for power competition from

Britain. Here, once more, will probably be the biggest stumbling block to any British attempt to sign the Rome Treaty.

If Britain should sign, nobody should be deluded about the motives for it. An attempt to join the Common Market will doubtless be heralded by numerous politicians as a step towards human unity and the brotherhood of man.

When we have discarded this frill of lies, we shall see that a revival of interest in Europe is due, as *The Economist* put it, to "... realities, not sentiments... powerful pressures..."

They might also have added that the realities and the pressures are those of the balance sheet. The British capitalist class will try to get into Europe only if they are convinced that their general interests, in terms of profit making and maintaining, are safer that way.

Whether they are right or wrong in such assessments is beside the point. What is very much to the point, however, is that the people who make the profits, and who are exploited and degraded in the process—the working class—should for once not be misled by the frills and should face the realities.

Malcolm X

According to his autobiography, Malcolm X expected to die violently, but probably most people expected that, if this happened, it would be by the hand of a white man.

The assassination provoked an outburst of hysteria and apprehension—even regret from people who were only recently denouncing the doctrines which Malcolm X had expounded.

The murdered man moved in a world of violence. His mother, he said, was conceived after a white man had raped his grandmother. His father was also murdered, his skull smashed in and his body flung under the wheels of a street car.

It was only after the seemingly inevitable career of crime and drug addiction that Malcolm X became interested in the Black Muslims—an event which, he wrote, gave him "a little feeling of self-respect."

He soon became prominent in the movement, attracting a lot of publicity with his teachings that the Negro should be strong, disciplined and ready to answer violence with violence. A few months ago he came to the Oxford Union to defend his own interpretation of Barry Gold-

BOOKS

The Philanthropists

THE RAGGED TROUSERED PHILANTHROPISTS. by Robert Tressell, *Panther Books*, 7s. 6d.

Robert Noonan spent the latter part of his life at Hastings working, when work was available, as a house painter and decorator and signwriter. He was a member of the local branch of the Social Democratic Federation. During the first decade of this century he devoted his leisure time to writing a novel which, in his own words, was to be "... a readable story full of human interest and based on the happenings of everyday life, the subject of Socialism being treated incidentally."

Noonan completed his task in 1910 and soon afterwards entered hospital, where he died of tuberculosis early in 1911. He left his manuscript to his daughter who, like many girls of her time, went into service, taking the manuscript with her. Three years later, following a chance conversation with a member of the staff of *Punch*, the work was brought out of her tin trunk and published under the author's title, *The Ragged trousered Philanthropists* and his pen name, Robert Tressell.

The earliest editions were abridged or, more correctly, emasculated. Chapters were left out and the remainder rearranged, phrases were altered and deleted, characters omitted and a tragic ending imposed to meet the commercial demands of the publishers and pander to current literary and political conventions.

Years later a group of enthusiasts re-collected the missing chapters, reconstructed and rearranged them in the form the author originally intended. A more complete edition, with only one chapter missing, was published in 1955 and it is

this fuller edition that is now published in paperback form. The original manuscript was presented to the TUC in 1959 and is now held at Congress House, London.

A book that can command continuous editions and reprints for over fifty years must surely qualify for the title, of a Classic. Thousands of workers have claimed that their political ideas were first stimulated by reading it.

In the story the author casts himself in the role of Owen, a house painter who devotes every opportunity to explaining to a group of workmates how they are exploited in all directions. Despite their abject poverty and insecurity of livelihood they defend capitalism with heat, using arguments that have long since disappeared from the vocabulary of all but the most stupid of anti-socialists.

Those who remember working class conditions during Edwardian days will know that Noonan writes fact into his fiction. He weaves into his story chapters on charitable organisations, religious bodies, unemployment, a parliamentary election, a workers' social outing, the Clarion cyclists, Public houses, public meetings and the seduction of a worker's wife, much of which was omitted from the earlier editions.

But Noonan did not expound Socialism. When he does propose an alternative to capitalism it turns out to be the woolly reformism of the Social Democratic Party, now in part inherited by the modern Labour Party. The characters that Noonan portrays as Socialists are advocates of nationalisation as the solution to the workers' problems. They visualise a benevolent State operating industry in the interests of the whole of the people, reducing working hours,

removing undesirable institutions and increasing wages so as to provide an equitable distribution of wealth. Noonan ridicules religious organisations but accepts the idea of a Great Spirit as creator of natural raw material.

It is astonishing that a man who so obviously realised that it is the private ownership of the means of wealth production from which stem the social evils about which he wrote so satirically, should halt his thinking on the threshold of the socialist alternative.

We have read this novel a number of times and with this recent reading we find that age has not staled it. We still smiled at the antics of the workers on their beano, we were still sad at the death of Philpot and we were still angry at the stupidity of Crass and the schemes of Sweater and Sir Graball D'Encloseland. With all its faults and limitations we shall probably read it again someday.

W. W.

Youngsters

GENERATION X

by Charles Hamblett and Jane Deverson *Tandem Books*, 3s. 6d.

The authors' avowed intention is to get young people talking about war, sex, marriage, drugs, politics in fact, everything that makes the jolly old world go round. Recent developments in mass communication mean that problems are more concentrated, more universally shared, quickly absorbed, used up and cast aside. This, say the co-authors, is the young persons' problem; the pressure of social and scientific development at the expense of biological time.

According to which random section of

the social system which degrades workers of all colours all over the world.

The Negroes are desperate, and in their desperation they have turned to organisations which sometimes are little better than a black Ku-Klux-Klan. They show little interest in the fact that race prejudice is only one part of the monstrous wall of ignorance which shields and supports the oppressive capitalist system.

As long as this continues, there will be small comfort in the American future. The shots which killed Malcolm X signalled that the Negro movement in the United States has served some sort of apprenticeship, and is now ready to go out into the world and shed blood in earnest.

this book is sampled, one could emerge with an attitude of great hope for a glorious future in the hands of an up-and-coming generation, or leave one's money to a dogs' home and hightail off to a Trappist Monastery. The authors' claim that their collective work destroys the myth of the existence of the so-called average teenager is made good.

Hamblett and Deverson interviewed characters ranging from stalwart christians to thugs so mentally sick that they see salvation as a big punch-up; a young high-class tart who aspired to marriage and children; the deb. who thought the world was fab; haters of the *status quo*; one dreadful youth who wanted to sponge on his parents and others for the rest of his life. (The pity is he lives in Stoke-on-Trent, and not Belgrave Square, so he will not get very far in his vocation.)

Not one of the young people interviewed seemed to be aware that teenagers having no great family liabilities, are a golden egg for the purveyors of certain forms of merchandise. They frequently expressed a fear of war, and blamed their parents for the world's mess. They did not hint that this attitude was common in the 1920's and that the youth of those times supported a second world war, and enrolled in movements like the Nazis, which would have left the maligned Edwardians aghast.

They regard their youth as a time for enjoyment, without a damn for the future, or as a personal Gethsemane before entering the adult stage. The long years of wage earning are not looked forward to by the lower income groups but there is a sense of resignation, a need to find a "nice" partner later on, and settle down. This same adult world they see as false, hypocritical and unctuous.

JACK LAW.

The Bomb is blamed for the sense of restlessness and indifference; way out sensations, drugs, sex and speed are candidly recognised as forms of escape from this possible doom. Is it just the Bomb or is it a vague realisation of the frustrations of working class life that awaits these young hopefuls?

All sorts of the youngsters expressed sympathy for coloured folk, and some put the opposite view with an extremity of violence. Few showed any signs that the sum total of their ideas is vastly different from their parents'. Fears of the future, contempt of past generations for their follies, a desire to adjust to new techniques unrestrained by past morality, are nothing new. Young and old have yet to learn that the way to a new society free from poverty, race-hatred, war and class antagonism is by the abolition of private property. This can only be attained by understanding the nature of the problems and the social relationships we experience, and by acting accordingly—in short by political organisation and action.

The mass of ideas expressed in *Generation X* spring from a support, no matter how qualified, of propertied society. When all is said and done it's much ado about nothing!

LITERATURE SALES

Members are urgently required to sell literature at Meetings of other organisations, to help with sales drives at Tube Stations, etc. Also to try and get Newsagents to take the S.S. Please contact J. Garnham at H.O. or let him have your name and address.

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3pm
East Street, Walworth, 12 noon

Mondays

Lincolns Inn Fields, 1-2pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm

BLOOMSBURY MEETINGS

The lectures held through the autumn and winter at the Asquith Room, 2 Soho Square, W1, will recommence in October.

ISLINGTON LECTURES

Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd., N7
Thursdays 8 pm

15th April

THE ARMS INDUSTRY
Speaker: J. Carter

29th April

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
Speaker: D. Zucconi

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MEETINGS**GLASGOW PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Woodside Public Halls
Sundays, 7.30 pm

4th April

ANY QUESTIONS?

R. Russell, J. Richmond, C. McEwen

11th April

IS THE CLASS STRUGGLE OUTDATED?

Speaker: A. Webster

18th April

THE POPE, THE PILL & POVERTY

Speaker: T. Mulheron

25th April

THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIALISM
Speakers: R. Donnelly, R. Vallar

STEVENAGE MEETINGS

54 Sish Lane
Mondays 8 pm

12th April

TRANSPORT IN 18th CENTURY
Speaker: L. Dale

26th April

TAPE RECORDING
INFLATION AND RECENT GOVERNMENT POLICY
Speaker: E. Hardy

WELWYN MEETING

Community Centre
Mill Green Rd., Welwyn Gdn. City

Thursday 22nd April, 8 pm

ORTHODOX ECONOMICS
Speaker: K. A. Knight

WEST LONDON

Westcott Lodge, The Mall
Hammersmith

Fridays 23rd and 30th April

TWO LECTURES ON ECONOMICS
Speaker: E. Hardy

INTER-BRANCH DISCUSSION

Bloomsbury

Paddington

West London

The Royal Oak, York Street,

Marylebone Road, W1

Wednesday 28th April, 8.30 pm

rally trafilgar square may day

3pm
SUNDAY 2 MAY

INDUSTRIAL OR POLITICAL ACTION

The idea that the workers have "power over industry" is exquisite foolery. What "conceivable force" gives them any such power? That is a question the Industrial Unionists cannot answer. The most they can do is to come out on strike, which, instead of controlling industry, is mere cessation of industry. Let them attempt to carry on production against the will of the owners of the means of production and they soon find the "power which the workers daily have in their hands while in the workshop" is not much of a protection against the policeman's baton, or the soldier's bullet.

Human physical power is resident in the bodies of mankind. For collective economic purposes it requires organising on the economic plane; for collective political purposes it must be politically organised. But for military purposes it must be organised on military lines. Now the master class have organised this "physical force" on all

three planes—for their own ends. Their economic organisation exists only to produce their profits; their political organisation exists to maintain their position and their interests; their military organisation exists as the supreme instrument for maintaining their privileged position.

To talk about the power of the workers in the workshops . . . loses sight of the fact that it is precisely to prevent the workers getting or exercising power in the field of industry (which they can only do by seizing the instruments of labour) that the armed forces of the nation primarily exist. It is for this reason that the workers cannot look to economic organisation to supply the "physical force to back up the ballot". The armed forces of the State are not to be opposed but are to be controlled, through the conquest of the machinery of government, and used for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

From the SOCIALIST STANDARD April 1915.

MANCHESTER AREA AND NORTH WEST ENGLAND

Owing to various circumstances, Party organisation and activity in this area has lapsed over the past few years. We now hope to be in a position to review the situation and try and get something going. What we have in mind is a one day Conference in Manchester within the next month or so, to assess our strength and fully discuss what activity can be arranged.

All members of Central Branch will receive a circular in due course. I would however, like all sympathisers and readers of the S.S. who would be interested in Socialist activity to write to me c/o Head Office. Any suggestions of what you have in mind would be very welcome to enable me to prepare a full report.

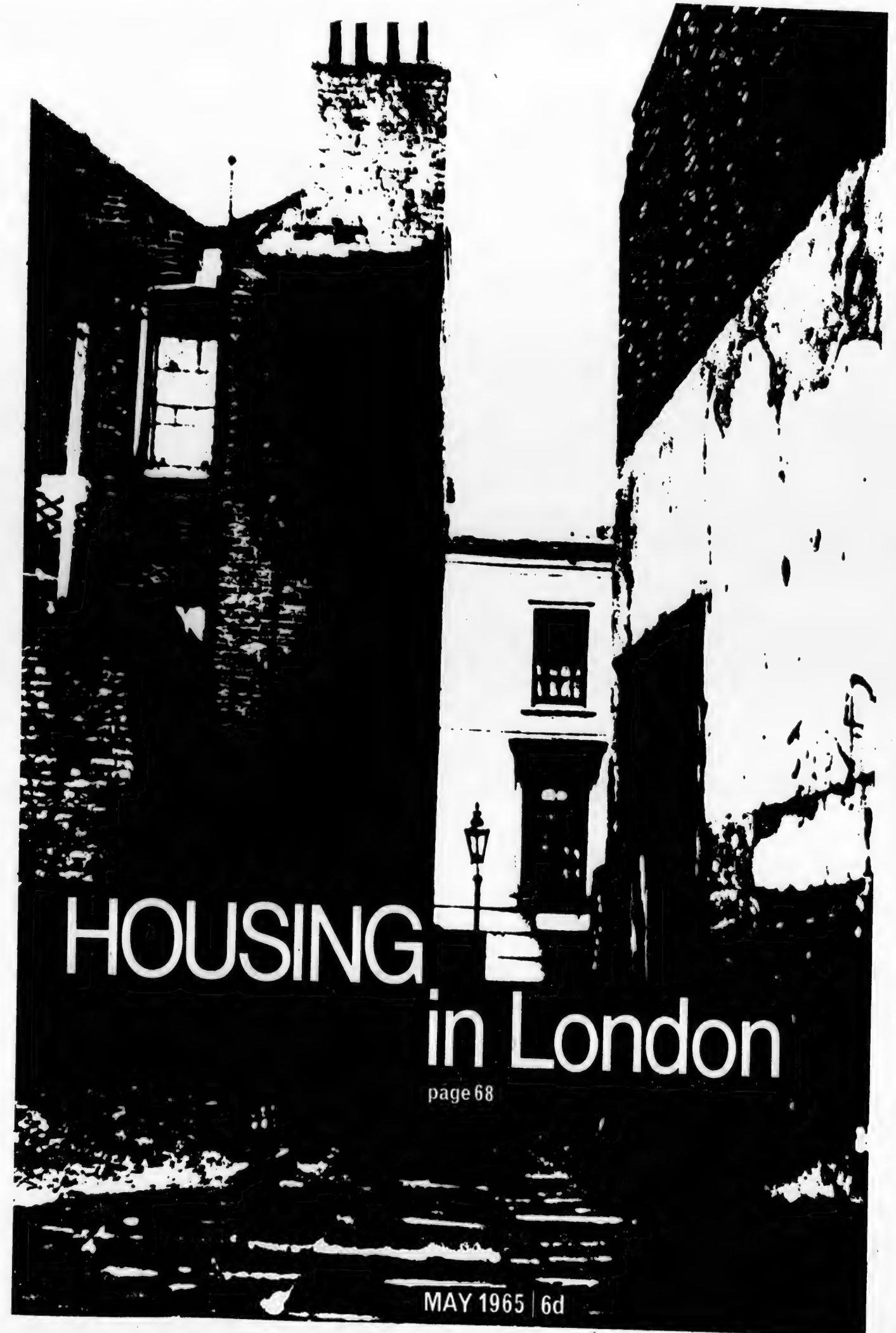
C. MAY, Central Organiser.

GLASGOW

Readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in the Drumchapel area can obtain their copies from Menzies, The Main Shopping Centre, Drumchapel.

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Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



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SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY Thursdays 8 pm. (6th and 20th May) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 7th May at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath (Tel. BEX 1950) and 21st May at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham SE9 (Tel. KIP 1796) Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 20 Clyde Street, Clydebank.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Glück, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

MID HERTS Meets 1st and 3rd Mondays of month at The Red Lion, High St. Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel: Hatfield 4802.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Nelson, above address.

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

MANCHESTER Enquiries: M. Hopwood, 4 St. Martins Rd., Ashton on Mersey, Sale. Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

NOTTINGHAM 1st Sunday in month (May 2nd) 8 pm, Co-op Hall, Heathcoat Street Correspondence: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesdays 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Thursdays (13th and 27th May) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (May 10th and 24th) 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowd, Llangyfelach, Swansea.

WEMBLEY Mondays 8 pm, Barham Old Court, Barham Park, near Sudbury Town Station, Wembley. Correspondence: R. G. Cain, 35 Waltham Rd., Southall, Middx.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (13th and 27th May) in month 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (14th and 28th May) in month 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford, Tel. 47302.

REDHILL Enquiries: A. A. Kemp, 19 Ashcombe Road, Merstham, Redhill, Surrey.

SUNDERLAND Details of meetings from P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



May Day myths

The myths of capitalism die hard.

There is, for example, the myth that the processions and demonstrations which take place on May Day have something to do with the unity of the working class.

It is true that the First of May is traditionally the workers' day, the day on which working people of all countries should express their solidarity with each other. The Socialist Party of Great Britain, and our companion parties abroad, celebrate the day in those terms. But apart from us, the tradition has been debased by modern realities.

The tanks, the missiles, the guns, the soldiers which are paraded through Moscow's Red Square are expressing, not the international unity, but the national strifes and prejudices, of the working class.

Throughout the so-called Communist bloc the story is the same. Bellicose speeches spiced with one or two outworn and meaningless clichés, which in reality are a challenge to the Western capitalist powers on behalf of their counterparts in the East, are applauded as revolutionary statements of working class interests.

In this country, the situation is no better. The Labour movement, which claims May Day for its own, is concerned not with the unity of the working class but with aggravating the issues which divide them.

A part of this movement demonstrates over Vietnam, disappointed that the Wilson government has treated the war there just as any other capitalist administration would.

It demonstrates over rents, losing itself in the impenetrable jungle of capitalist reform. It attacks the Conservatives, mistakenly believing that they are greater enemies of the working class than are the Labour Party.

It demonstrates on many things, none of them of any worth. Hands off this country. Hands on that country. Get this person out of goal. Put that person in.

These are all part of what the Left wing has always loved to call "spontaneous" demonstrations which show the "solidarity" of the workers. They are part of a favourite Left wing myth—that the working class are united.

This is a lie. The workers are split on a multitude of issues. They are split over the race and colour issue. They are split over which side they should take in the international disputes of the world's ruling classes. They are even split over which party they want to run British capitalism.

These splits are the fruits of about sixty years of Labour Party propaganda. The Left wing—the "progressive" politicians—have never done anything to heal them. Rather have they created some of the worst of them.

There is, therefore, an urgent need for someone to state, constantly and consistently, the reasons why the working class should be united.

The working class are those people in capitalist society who get their living by working for a wage. They sell their ability to work to their employers, which means that their interests as sellers of labour power are one, against those of the class who buy their labour power.

In the process of labour the working class are exploited. Here is the source of their problems—their poverty, their degradation, the ceaseless pressures of insecurity which distort their lives.

Here is the source of bad housing, of worry, of much misery and sickness. Capitalism overshadows all our lives with fear and restrictions. All workers share an international unity of interest to abolish capitalism and replace it with socialism.

None of this is ever whispered at the multitude of Left wing demonstrations

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

which deface May Day. The myths are dying hard, but facts have a force which cannot be denied.

The working class as a whole do not yet realise where their interests lie. If they demonstrate on May Day at all, it is for the wrong motives. Rather than waste their time in this way, they should unite to abolish the system which causes the problems they demonstrate about.

RALLY MAY DAY

Housing in London

The root cause of the housing problem in big cities like London is the capitalist system under which housing accommodation is bought and sold. For many years now the housing market has been subject to various controls but neither these, nor council houses, nor subsidies, alter the basic characteristic of housing under capitalism.

Once a city is established as such, the economics of capitalism ensure that the growth of demand for workers assumes a momentum of its own, for the great concentration of people in a city provides a vast market for so-called consumer goods and services. Even in times of depression the drift to the cities continues. But it is in times of full employment that the housing problem becomes acute because in such conditions the rate of growth of employment usually exceeds the rate of growth of housing. Inevitably this creates problems. This basically is what is happening in London today. As the Milner Holland Report puts it:

If the growth of housing does not match the growth of employment there will be trouble of some kind.

Precisely, and they might have added that, given this basic situation, any measures applied to deal with it can only be palliatives. The Report is in fact a very useful document for exposing the futility of reformism on the housing question, though of course it was not meant to be.

Before going on to look into this, however, it will be useful first to clear up any misunderstanding that the words *landlord* and *rent* may create. The source of all Rent, Interest and Profit is the unpaid labour of the working class, using the term Rent to refer to the share of the proceeds of working class exploitation which those who own the land are able to extract from the capitalist class. It does not refer to house-rent which is a different thing altogether. House-rent is not a share of the unpaid labour of the working class but it is a *price*; in fact the price paid for accommodation.

In the 19th century it was correct to speak of a landlord class distinct and separate from the industrial capitalist class, and indeed between these two classes there was a struggle over taxation and the control of the state. This landlord class was composed of landowners pure and simple. Today the term is also used to refer to those who are engaged in the business of selling accommodation. These two types of landlord should not be confused; the Labour Party and other demagogues frequently attack "landlords" just as, long ago, John Stuart Mill or Lloyd George tried to dupe the workers into doing the dirty work for the capitalist class in dealing with their enemies, the landowners.

As a matter of fact most of the so-called landlords today are not landowners at all. It is a fact that among the groups which the notorious Rachman swindled were those who owned the land on which his houses stood. The basic point here is

this: the worker is *exploited* at the point of production. He is not exploited anywhere else—and no more by the private landlord from whom he purchases accommodation than by the shopkeeper from whom he purchases the other things he needs. He can be *swindled* by such people—and the Milner Holland Report does expose some swindles by landlords—but this is a different matter altogether and besides is not confined to working class buyers. The worker is exploited as a producer, not as a buyer.

Further, many members of the working class are themselves technically landlords as the table reproduced from the Report shows.

No. of Lettings in London area	Proportion of Landlords %	Proportion of Lettings %
1	60.4	14
2-4	25.1	16
5-9	9.2	13
10-24	3.6	11
25-49	0.9	7
50-99	0.5	7
100-499)		12
500-999)	0.3	5
1000 or more)		15

As can be seen the vast majority of private landlords in London only have up to two or three tenants while sixty per cent have only one tenant. These figures speak for themselves. They suggest that many private landlords are members of the working class letting a room or two to supplement their income from working—a point which should be borne in mind when the demagogues shout about "private landlordism". It means that measures taken against private landlords in general, while perhaps bettering the position of some members of the working class, hit those others who supplement their wages in this way. This, incidentally, confirms that it is impossible to unite the working class on any *reform* issue because reform movements are not based on the *class interests* of the working class as exploited producers. Housing reform movements are no exception.

The Table also shows inequality in the ownership of housing accommodation. This inequality is not as great as might be expected. Another Table in the Report shows that "only about six per cent of all dwellings in Greater London are financed by capital drawn directly from the capital market." This figure also speaks for itself: investment in private houses for rent is *unprofitable*. This has various results. The big capitalists stay clear of housing, which is thus left to small capitalists and people like Rachman. The Labour Party went to town over Rachman but they overlooked the fact that he

TRAFALGAR SQUARE SUNDAY 2 MAY 3 pm

Speakers E. Grant
L. Fenton
S. Orner
H. Young
D. Zucconi

was the product of the policies, such as Rent Control, they had been advocating against private landlords. It was these measures which contributed in no small way to making investment in private housing for rent unprofitable—thus opening the way for the Rachmans!

	%
Local Authorities	18
Housing Ass, etc.	1
Large Private	6
Small Private	33
Owner-occupiers	38

(For various reasons this doesn't add up to 100. See p. 25)

When the Rent Act of 1957 was being discussed Socialists were invited to oppose it,—in effect to support Rent Control. Besides pointing out that at best Rent Control could only be a palliative, we drew attention to the fact that there was evidence to show that Rent Control gave rise to its own problems, in particular to the neglect and decay of privately owned and rented houses, thus worsening conditions for some workers. In other words it made the situation worse for some in improving it for others. A typical reform. Rent Control is in fact a classic case of the futility of reformism, of running fast to get nowhere. The Milner Holland Report contains many similar examples of much-touted reforms and their miserable results.

On compulsory purchase of sweating landlords by local authorities:

Some authorities expressed the view when giving evidence to us, that compulsory purchase was no way of dealing with this problem. They pointed out that even if a compulsory purchase order was confirmed the owner received the full market value of his house as compensation, inflated in some degree by the very high rents which he was charging. With the proceeds of the compulsory sale he was then able to buy another house and charge the same high rents, thus defeating the whole purpose of the exercise.

Of local authorities refusing to use statutory powers to improve conditions:

... statutory powers, though in theory adequate to deal with overcrowding and the worst effects of multiple occupation, are virtually unused in some districts where the problem is most acute. This may be due to the fear that any action taken is likely to result in evictions to relieve overcrowding, to obviate the need for extra facilities, to make room for extra facilities, or simply as a reprisal against tenants whose complaints have prompted action by the local authority. The use of the available powers in a situation of acute shortage therefore tends to improve the situation in terms of dwellings but may shift the people suffering bad conditions into equally unsuitable accommodation elsewhere, or may even make them homeless... The

choice is between two evils: on the one hand, allowing over-occupation to continue, and on the other, insisting on improvements which at best cause distress, and at worst result in homelessness.

Of slum clearance making the situation worse:

The progress of slum clearance intensifies the competition for living space, since it must cater for numbers of households substantially larger than the number of dwellings to be demolished, and it may also encourage a further subdivision of existing households into smaller and more numerous units.

Other examples of the futility of reformism which can be gleaned from the Report are: of slum clearance getting nowhere as slums appear faster than they are cleared; of tenants' legal rights as mere scraps of paper for fear of eviction; of concentration on building new houses leading to the neglect of old homes; of tenants refusing improvements because they could not afford the higher rents which would result.

In conditions of shortage it is always the supplier, in this case the private landlord, who has the upper hand. What is happening in London is that in the competition for housing accommodation those who can't pay get the worse. Some don't get anything. At present there are 1,500 homeless families, some 7,000 people, in London and their numbers are growing. These are the lower-paid section of the working class, who have to put up with really bad housing conditions.

It seems likely that the next reform in this field will be a measure to try to improve the position of this section by giving them greater security of tenure or subsidising special housing for them. No doubt this reform too will have its catch: some other section of the working class will find itself worse off. To quote again the passage from the Report: "if the growth of housing does not match the growth of employment there will be trouble of some kind". The only question is of what kind, and for which section of the working class. The point is, given the basic situation *some people must suffer*. The politicians are merely arguing about who this should be.

Overcrowding, high rents, homelessness intimidation and the other ills from which many workers suffer are a direct result of fact that demand for accommodation exceeds the supply. In large cities like London this must happen and is likely to be permanent. The Report itself says as much: "the housing problems confronting great cities... are of a long term if not permanent character". The Report also, very appropriately, draws attention to the fact that this problem is not new. They quote from a similar report made by Charles Booth in 1901. Of course since then some housing conditions have improved in many respects but as the Report points out the problem "remains fundamentally the same."

A.L.B.

Tories: No holds barred

LIKE someone picking at a scab, the Tories seem unable to forget their leadership controversy.

Even the declarations of unity—almost every weekend at least one Conservative M.P. tells a meeting somewhere what a sound fellow Sir Alec Douglas-Home is—only draw attention to the fact that the controversy is still going on. The most ardent of speeches merely succeeds in suggesting that, if Home were not under fire, there would be no need for such a show of loyalty towards him.

It is, in fact, an established tradition—and one with good political reason—in the Conservative Party always to do their best to present a united front against all comers. Sometimes, it is true, we get a glimpse of knives flashing in the background behind this front; but generally the Tories do not treat us to the spectacle of the glorious public rows which the Labour Party have indulged in.

The Tories have always posed as the gentleman's party, implying that, whatever the difficulties, they know how to behave themselves. This should deceive nobody. Precisely because they are a political party aiming to run capitalism, and especially because they are never far from the seat of power, the Conservatives, collectively and individually, must be as ruthless as anyone else.

They have had their share of leaders who have filled this particular bill—for example Stanley Baldwin, who played the political game with a relentless cunning under the guise of a pipe-sucking, ruminative, honest countryman. More recently, too, the gentleman's party have had their tough infighters. There was a lot of truth in the crack from Harold Wilson (who knows a thing or two about this subject himself) that whenever Macmillan, when he was Prime Minister, came back from abroad, Mr. Butler hurried to the airport to grip him warmly by the throat.

At the moment there is obviously a bitter struggle going on for the leadership of the Conservative Party. From some points of view this may appear as a battle between Maudling, Heath and McLeod for the succession after Home has gone. Whether or not this is true, a battle to succeed Home may of itself be enough to unseat him.

Sir Alec, it seems, wants to stay, although some political correspondents whisper that he is weary of it all and is only waiting for his troublesome underlings to decide who is to take his place and then he will fade away into the substantial shadows of Coldstream. It is possible that Home's hand was forced into agreeing to the new method of electing future Tory leaders—something unknown in a party which, as befits gentlemen, has always relied upon discreet soundings rather than an open vote.

Home assured us that, although he was very pleased with the new election plan, he did not think highly enough of it to allow it to apply to himself. He, who came to the leadership through the customary processes of consultation, was not going to risk losing it all in a vulgar, demotic election. Perhaps there is some political sense in this. If Home agreed to stand, and was opposed, the split in the Tory ranks would be revealed for all to see. If he stood and lost . . . but that simply does not bear thinking about, in the deep leather armchairs of the Carlton. Better to leave the whole beastly thing alone.

The election plan was conceded only after a long period of agitation. Men like Mr. Humphrey Berkeley were the front-runners in this, but behind the scenes there must have been more powerful—and more hopeful—voices also pressing for the same thing. Of course, when it was all settled all good Tories made the best of it, claiming that they had found an

ultra-democratic method of electing their leader. They forgot that they had always insisted that the method they were abandoning gained a far clearer assessment of opinion in their party, and was therefore more democratic, than any simple election.

They also forgot—or ignored—the fact that leadership has nothing to do with democracy. All capitalist parties agree that it is necessary to have a leader, and that it is his job to lead. But this means that the leader must often go against popular wishes, for what is the point of having a leader to take decisions if he is also supposed to take orders from the people he is leading?

The Tories clear up this point very simply, by making no secret of the fact that they intend to run—and perhaps reform—capitalism from day to day as they think fit, with no reference to their members. The Labour Party used to have a different line. Their members were supposed to have a voice in deciding their policy; some of them may actually have thought that the decisions of a Labour conference would influence a Labour government. There is no room for doubt on this score now. Labour has made it clear that they will govern as British capitalism requires, and not at the dictates of their members, who are liable to get all sorts of woolly and inconvenient notions about keeping out of wars and sticking by election promises. Democracy, in other words has been put firmly in its place.

Home's sudden elevation to the Premiership was attacked by many people, especially of course the Labour Party, on the grounds that he is an aristocrat. These attacks were based on the argument that aristocrats are bound to govern badly because they are aloof from the great mass of honest, horny handed people. The corollary of this is that political leaders who come from the ordinary people are sure to govern us wisely and equitably.

We do not have to work very hard to dispose of this delusion. Labour governments have always prided themselves in having more than one son of the toiling masses among their ranks. Sometimes these men have held top jobs, yet they have done them in much the same way as any High Tory aristocrat.

There was, for example, Jimmy Thomas, who was so proud of his engine driver background that he went around mislaying and misplacing as many aitches as he possibly could, much to the amusement of the opulent circles in which he moved. (He once complained, at a glittering social gathering, of having "an 'ell of an 'eadache", whereupon the late Lord Birkenhead advised him to "go home and take an aspirate.") Then there was Ernie Bevin, who cultivated the same habit, allied to a fondness for blunt speaking which recalled his beginnings as a farm labourer.

Neither of these men, when they were in power, did anything to encourage us to elect their like to office again. The interests of the British capitalist class had no more zealous defenders than they. They walked with kings but made sure that they did not lose the common touch, which was so useful at election times and when addressing the TUC.

All capitalist parties are wedded to the lie that this is the age of the Common Man. It is true that the Common Man sometimes gets to power, but when he does so he runs capitalism as ruthlessly—and often with a sight more cunning—than any landed lord. The Labour Party has always set the pace in propagating the lie, although nowadays their favourite badge is not so much the cloth cap as the scientist's white coat. The Tories, too, are in on the deception. They produce tame trade unionists, and give them hopeless seats to fight at

election time. They announced that their new chairman, Mr. du Cann, is an ex-grammar schoolboy. This was meant to convince us that they had a leader who had battled through the eleven plus to the sort of school which our own kids might go to. In fact, they were stretching the meaning of the term grammar school; the places where Edward Dillon Lott du Cann got his education—Colet Court and Woodbridge—represent something much more expensive than is open to the average working class child.

Thus, in many ways the dice may seem to be loaded against Sir Alec. Any mistakes he might make will be blamed onto his blue-blooded origins. Tory publicists do their best to cover up his *faux-pas*—his confession to doing his balance of payments sums with the aid of matches, his "little donation" speech, his half-moon glasses. They assure us that although Home may not have a great deal of political cunning, he is possessed of abundant integrity.

Those of us with longer memories, or with a thirst for the facts, will know that Home was one of the supporters of the 1938 Munich agreement, and that he needed something other than integrity when he was defending that agreement in the House. We also know that he was Secretary for Commonwealth Relations from 1955 to 1960, which means that he is firmly identified with the Suez double-cross, the Nyasaland fraud and all the other dirty deals which were pulled off during that period and subsequently, when he held higher office. In fact, one of the first things a capitalist politician must discard is his integrity.

In any case, honesty will not rescue Home. His position is insecure, there are hungry men waiting to pounce, and his party is in confusion. Amid this chaos, it is appropriate to state the facts on the leadership issue.

Leaders, whoever they are and whatever their party, exist because of the ignorance of their followers. But at the same time their actions must be confined within, and must not offend, that ignorance. At the present this does not cause any upsets because the people who are content to be led are also content to keep capitalism going.

But this means that the leaders, who often get power on promises to solve certain problems, are quite unable to keep their word. They must promise to safeguard peace at the same time as they are assiduously organising the production of weapons of war. They must promise to conquer capitalism's economic upsets when in fact they have not the faintest idea of what to do about them.

It also means that they must cheat and lie; they must wholeheartedly engage in the ruthless game of politics. They must shake hands with their deadliest political enemy while keeping the other hand firmly on the safety catch—and while knowing that their enemy is doing the same. And all this must go on while they are professing, if they are Tories, to being a party of gentlemen, or if they are Labourites, to being the party of common humanity.

Mr. Enoch Powell, an M.P. who has the endearing habit of often blowing inconvenient gaffs which his colleagues find embarrassing in the extreme, once wrote:

... political purposes . . . are concerned with public opinion and the persuasion of large numbers. The politician's business is not investigating and expounding facts for their own sake. Facts become relevant to his job only when people are ready to take an interest in them, so that they become potential instruments of persuasion and action.

Sometimes the politicians succeed in convincing the working class that they are effective. Then they are canonised as great

men. Often they fail. Then one leader is deposed, as Home may be deposed, to be replaced by another. But the essential of the situation—the repressive and degrading capitalist system—remains. The majority of people continue to be exploited and harassed and, peculiarly, to opt to stay like that.

As long as they have their leaders to show them the way into chaos, the workers are content. Home may go but the set-up which bore him and finished him will remain. The roundabout goes on and on, round and round, up and down. Only the man who is in charge of the engine changes occasionally. The sickening motion of the thing goes on, and will continue to do so until the passengers who are suffering from it all decide that they have had enough.

IVAN.

"Where have all the socialists gone"

THIS was a question headlined by a *Daily Mail* writer, Mr. Walter Terry, on March 15th. He answered it himself: "They've joined the Government, one by one." As Socialists haven't gone anywhere, and certainly not into the Government, it had better be explained at once that the people Mr. Terry had in mind are the so-called "Left Wing" leaders of the Labour Party. He names Barbara Castle, Anthony Greenwood and Frank Cousins along with others who, invited by Harold Wilson to take government jobs have done so, and as public critics of government policy their voice is no longer heard. What could be more natural? Having got the government and the policies of their choice what else should they do? But Mr. Terry's point is that the things the Government is doing and saying are not at all to the liking of the rank and file admirers of these "left wing" leaders.

He had been reading the letters of protest and dissent in *Tribune* and the *New Statesman* and quotes as a typical example: "I, for one, feel utterly disheartened . . . Where have all the socialists gone? What was the election fight all for?"

Mr. Terry tells us how he sees the situation:

Suddenly the Left Wingers feel cheated. Coddled and encouraged by the Prime Minister, they now have a chill feeling that they have been taken to the cleaners . . . Over Vietnam, defence and foreign affairs generally they discovered belatedly that instead of pursuing what they would call Socialist policy, the Government, in different words, treads a similar road to the Tories. Even on steel nationalisation, the virility symbol of Socialism, there is a nagging doubt (justified too) that, somehow, someone will try to dodge it.

It is plain to see that the Labour voters Mr. Terry wrote about are in a state of extreme confusion. The election was not fought by Tory, Liberal and Labour parties about the issue whether capitalism should be replaced with Socialism, but about which group of politicians should have the job of looking after the domestic and foreign problems of British capitalism. They have not been "taken to the cleaners," they took themselves. If they had given a little thought to the nature of capitalism and Socialism and to the political out-

look of the electorate they would have known beforehand that government policies after the election had to be capitalist policies. The electorate did not and does not want Socialism and was not asked to consider it as a possibility.

And Mr. Terry is just as muddled as they are: steel nationalisation is not a "virility symbol of Socialism." It has nothing to do with Socialism and even from a vote-catching point of view is about as virile as King Charles' head.

The talk of nationalisation does however provoke a more important question, that of the sad outcome of the idea some Labour Party forerunners had when they first took it up. They and this included Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb and Keir Hardie—declared their aim to be "Communism", meaning by the term what Marx meant and what the S.P.G.B. means,—a social revolution involving the abolition of class ownership of the means of production and distribution, the wages system etc. They did not imagine that nationalisation, which merely puts the government or a government appointed board, in place of the private capitalist or capitalist company, was Socialism. They, or at least some of them, did not even share the illusion that nationalisation has any advantage for the workers inside capitalism. What they did think was that the nationalisation of monopolies and large-scale industries would provide an easier structural framework for a Socialist working class to introduce Socialism.

They then faced the problem that the workers had not been won over to an understanding of Socialism—and their reaction was to run away from it. On the plea of wanting to

do something immediately to solve the worst evils afflicting the workers, (including the abolition of war), they rejected the S.P.G.B. case for the paramount need to propagate Socialism and work for Socialism and went in for "practical" politics, by which they meant getting a Labour Government elected.

They had already in effect given up the struggle for Socialism—Labour candidates seeking election could not hope to get votes from non-Socialist workers by telling them that nationalisation was of no practical benefit here and now but would be useful later on to get Socialism, so they more and more claimed that nationalisation was an end in itself, something leading to lower prices and better wages and that it would be good for all, including the rest of the capitalists (other than those whose industry was being taken over).

Time, and actual experience of nationalisation at work, have had a savage revenge on the defeatists who propagated the original theory that the way to get Socialism was to organise and fight for something else. The predominant leaders of the Labour Party know that an electoral campaign seeking a mandate to nationalise all industries would bring them certain defeat. Nationalisation is an irrelevance to capitalists and workers alike; it has little bearing on the actual problems facing British capitalism and none at all on the position of the workers. If all that Mr. Terry's wrongly called "Socialists" have lost is the chance of having some more state capitalism they haven't lost anything worth having. Why not forget it and start thinking about Socialism?

H.

GEORGE BROWN IN CLOUD CUCKOO LAND

Mr. George Brown, Minister of Economic Affairs, is convinced that there are such things as "fair" incomes and prices, and has got the employers' and employees' organisations to agree to attempt to regulate prices and incomes. He knows "his people" so well to be sure that when the instructions get to the individual worker and capitalist they will make them work.

Briefly, the Prices and Incomes Policy is to regulate the growth of all incomes at the rate of three and a half per cent per year, whilst keeping prices stable. George Brown hopes that public opinion will influence capitalists to keep prices down when they could put them up, and that it will restrain workers' wage demands.

This policy will fail for exactly the same reason as "free" enterprise regulated by the price system. Brown seems to forget that capitalism is a competitive class society and that the economic forces acting upon capitalists and workers are stronger than all the moral suasions and judgements. In fact already there are many claims by sections of the working class aiming to get on to a "platform of equality" with other workers, e.g. doctors, teachers, farmers, before the

growth rate commences. Further, there are many workers, some recognised by George Brown as being lowly paid, who will have to press for increases considerably greater than three and a half per cent.

The big laugh is that if by some fluke George Brown were to succeed and peg wage growth rates at three and a half per cent, we may all be like Alice—running faster and faster to stay in the same place. There is not much point in having three and a half per cent increase in wages if you have to pay three and a half per cent more for the things that you require to get the health and strength to increase your productivity by at least three and a half per cent.

But then who are we to laugh at George? We can't solve his problem either. In fact, within capitalism the problem is not soluble. If we widen our terms of reference however, the whole aspect takes a rosy, instead of blue, hue. The world has enough resources to satisfy the needs of man—we have the population capable of exploiting those resources, of producing the goods where man needs them—only capitalism, with its production for profit, stands in the way.

Rachman, Bloom, Ferranti are a natural part of capitalism. George Brown cannot change a society in which the hall mark, and professed route to efficiency, is competition, into one where-in co-operation prevails, without changing the economic basis of society; and we can rest assured that he cannot do that.

K.K.

LITERATURE SALES

Members are urgently required to sell literature at Meetings of other organisations, to help with sales drives at Tube Stations, etc. Also to try and get Newsagents to take the S.S. Please contact J. Garnham at H.O. or let him have your name and address.

FOR READERS IN DRUMCHAPEL

Owing to circumstances beyond its control Glasgow Branch will be unable to contest the Knightswood Ward in this year's Municipal Elections.

BLOOMSBURY MEETINGS

The lectures held through the autumn and winter at the Asquith Room, 2 Soho Square, W1. will recommence in October.

BOOKS RECEIVED

MALATESTA, HIS LIFE AND IDEAS. Freedom Press, 21s.

Another Australian ghost town

GEOFFREY BLAINEY briefly traces out the history till 1959 of the lead, silver and copper mines of Mount Isa in his book, *Mines of the Spinifex*. These are located in the north west of tropical Queensland. Blainey outlines the incredible number and forms of hazards that had to be faced and subdued before the mines could be opened and operated. Among these were swarms of flies, red choking dust, persistent high temperatures, scurvy, malaria and thirst. Also, hostile Aborigines, apparently fearing for their own tribal future, never hesitated to spear or club to death all surveyors and prospectors they could. Isolation, and therefore transportation, was and still is a large factor in end costs. Westwards from Townsville, its nearest port, Mount Isa lies 600 miles across plains of red dust and prickly spinifex.

Yet so promising were the chances of fortunes to be made from mining in this savage, desolate waste land that investors Australian, English, Russian and now predominately American were persuaded to advance capital to develop the mines and reduce the environment to conditions of European habitation and modern industry. Dams were built large enough to impound tropical rains and supply the needs of both town and mines for years ahead. Even the dread of medical isolation was removed with the advent of the John Flynn Flying Doctor Service.

Capital, superb as it is in solving these massive problems of nature, must always falter and fail when confronting social problems peculiarly of its own creation. Indeed, as wild nature is tamed, in like proportion there emerges the destructive

force of the class war which is an impediment to wealth production just as much as wild nature. That wary London publication, *The Economist* of July 9th, 1927 (writes Blainey) "prophetically warned investors that (a) metal prices could easily fall and that (b) labour conditions in Australia were onerous and (c) that the cost of equipping the mine could far outstrip the estimates." (Mount Isa paid out its first net profits in 1936-37—after 13 years of sporadic operations). "It admitted that Mount Isa might become great." Mount Isa became the largest single industry in the State, employing over four thousand workers and each week paying out £100,000 wages and "earning" over one million pounds revenue.

Commodity prices, (rising or falling), and labour problems: how these two factors have repeatedly flawed and fractured the apparently smooth and polished surface of modern society everywhere.

The first Mount Isa strike was in protest over the high price of beer. The next, 1933, closed down the mine for months. Prophetically, the miners would not return to work unless two of their sacked mates were re-employed. The prophesy of the *Economist* re-appears and rapidly assumes a more substantial form from December, 1963 onwards.

It was then that, theoretically, the present Mount Isa dispute began, when the Australian Worker's Union (A.W.U.) representing the Mount Isa miners lodged claims for £4 per week pay rise and improved conditions. In April 1964 these were refused on the legal quibble that the £4 per week was a bonus and not a wage claim. To the mineowners, either way, the claim clearly represented an encroachment on their profit. And this is something the investors seek to avoid, even if straining of legal subtleties and cynical evasions do insult the intelligence of the workers. After another four months of apparent deliberations, in August 1964 the miners decided to ban contract labour and to revert to day wages, and to stay this way until their claims were granted. This continued for four more months, during which time the weekly wage was less than half contract rates and mine production had fallen steeply.

This was a period of fermentation. The employers declared that the contract ban by miners was a strike. Branch unions defied parent bodies. Local labour leaders emerged, more representative and knowledgeable of local affairs and tempers. Then the combustible element of victimisation was cast into this tropical furnace of class war. The popular and able leader of the contract banning miners, Pat Mackie, was sacked by the company for attending union affairs during working hours. Mackie's objection to dismissal was legally over-ruled. A few days later he was expelled by the A.W.U. (This seems to be always the weakness of the One Big Union ideal—the parent body upon formation begins again to disintegrate into hostile local factions, at odds both among themselves and against the central union authority. At Mount Isa this became very much in evidence.)

On December 10th the Queensland Government declared the area to be under Emergency Regulations and moved in extra policemen. The Mount Isa miners were ordered to resume contract work and the penalties for refusing can be One Hundred Pounds fine or six months in jail or both; in addition daily penalties can be imposed. Thus, if refusal continues for 50 days, each miner who holds out could be jailed for 25 years, be fined five thousand pounds, or both.

All this, naturally, resulted in fanning the live coals of class war. There was a quickening of union activities. More meetings, more defiance and still more Emergency Regulations and conferences. Then on December 24th, the original legal

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3 pm
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McCLELLAN GALLERIES
Sauchiehall Street

A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY

Speakers: C. May (London), J. Richmond

BIRMINGHAM

BULL RING, 3 pm

BRISTOL

DURDHAM DOWNS, 3 pm

MARKET SQUARE, 3 pm

NOTTINGHAM

quibble of April was suddenly set aside and a £3 increase was granted. By mid-January 1965, improved conditions and contract rates were also agreed upon.

Marx, in *Capital* Vol. 1, Chapter VI informs us that, as distinct from other commodities, "... there enters into the determination of the value of labour power a historical and moral element." (See footnote) "Moral" considerations, so dear to the hearts of our masters, now proved to be the major hindrance to immediate settlement of the Mount Isa dispute when they revealed a leaning towards working class interests. The original dispute in the material and economic sense has ended. But others took its place. These were over the re-employment of Pat Mackie by the mining company and the company recognition of the Mount Isa T. & L. C. as a future negotiating body for Mount Isa employees. With both of these Union requests the company refused to comply. And so the dispute became a strike, on the issues of victimisation and union representation, with all their implications.

While these issues were still smouldering, the Queensland Government inflamed the entire Labour Movement of Australia by yet another Emergency Proclamation which transformed Queensland into a Police State. Meetings of protest were being organised all over Australia together with pledges of moral and financial support; indeed as noted by an *Age* leader:

The Queensland Government in its desperate effort to check the disastrous Mount Isa strike, seems to have injected more fuel into a highly inflammable situation, which now threatens to explode into a State-wide and perhaps a Nation-wide industrial upheaval.

Not entirely surprising was the news that all the Emergency Police powers had been suspended. Premier Nicklin contrary to his earlier declared purpose for invoking these powers ("gangsterism strong-arm tactics etc., among the miners") suddenly revoked them. However, these Regulations in practice and intent were still less savage than those put into operation by the Federal Labour Government during the 1949 strike which "... included freezing of union funds to prevent sustenance payments to workers, the forbidding of credit to the strikers and the use of troops to mine coal and transport it." (*Herald* 10.2.65)

Through February the miners firmly continued the strike,

while the mining company and Arbitration Commission issue orders and counter order on the closing or non-closing down of the mine. Meanwhile hundreds of miners and their families, each week, moved outwards from this strike-bound and blighted Central Queensland Township, seeking employment elsewhere. From the other side of the world came this clear comprehending and candid appraisal of Australian affairs:

The strike is more than a local labour dispute. It is contributing to a sharp rise in world copper prices which had been falling this month.

It is infecting the whole of the Australian labour relations. The elements of legal compulsion that once seemed to be such an admirable feature of the Australian arbitration system has not been able to cope with the refractory labour force in a low-wage area like Queensland at a time of generally full employment, (*The Times* 10.2.65.).

Finally, Prime Minister Menzies, returning from overseas, said "... its terrible that the Mount Isa works could be snuffed out by a curious character, (Pat Mackie, who by the way volunteered to withdraw from Mount Isa once the Miners' pay and other demands were settled), who is not even an Australian." Just how irrelevant can a person be? As though the nationality of the victimisation issue is of importance, any more than is the issue as to whether these mines are owned and controlled by Australian or "Foreign" capital.

Mr. Calwell, leader of the Aus.L.P., on this point declares: "What is needed above all in this Mount Isa situation is compassion for the people of Mount Isa, compassion for the families of the miners and of the shop-keepers, compassion for the men (i.e. the international investigators), who have planned great schemes of expansion only to see them frustrated ... The dignity of the Labour movement is expressed when it takes full responsibility for everything it does." (*Age* 23.2.65.)

Yet only four days earlier he supported the use of Australian troops in Borneo, indicating thereby a direct denial of compassion for "the people, the families of peasants and soldiers, shopkeepers etc.," on both sides who suffer the horrors of S.E. Asia warfare. Both the open class war of Mount Isa and the war in the jungles of Asia are but two warring aspects with a common origin.

Where now is the dignity of the Australian Labour Movement?

PETER FUREY.

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Attitudes about work

IN the April *SOCIALIST STANDARD* the question of work was considered especially in relation to the objection frequently voiced at Socialist meetings that in view of man's natural laziness, the demand for a society free from the economic compulsion of wage labour, is impractical. This is a mere prejudice about human behaviour. Even so, it is necessary to see this attitude in perspective and to account for the reasons why in capitalist society, work is brought into disrepute and often held to be repugnant.

Socialists argue that work and attitudes to work must be understood in relation to the social conditions in which it is carried on. Under capitalism work cannot be separated from employment and employment as a word is only a polite substitute for economic exploitation. Wage work inevitably reduces a man to the indignity of subservience and exploitation. As well as this, the kind of functions into which workers are channelled does not spring spontaneously from their requirements as individuals but is prescribed for them by the division of labour in a commercial society, so that the worker's role becomes something imposed on him by forces external to himself. Both these factors assist in forming the view that man by nature finds work distasteful, but as well as these factors, all the attitudes and values of modern propertied society are hostile to work.

Although the government, employers and other interested parties continually exhort the working class to work harder, their interest in the matter is their concern for the employers' material interests. The most immediate effect of workers working harder is that they are exploited more and their employers realise more profit. Beyond the hypocrisy of social parasites finding virtue in hard work so long as it does not refer to them, esteem and respectability in modern propertied society is still accorded to the individual in direct proportion to the amount of property that he or she owns. In our commercial society, it is money that generally speaking still provides the most immediate indication of the individual's status. Under capitalism, personality, money and status are all inter-related in giving the character of man in a commercial society. In a propertied society, individuality expresses itself through the command of property and the ownership of things and to this end, money fulfils the magical function of enhancing the personality of an individual within the community.

Social aspirations and standards of respectability are

towards ownership and consumption. Against this background, the real attitude towards the work involved in the creation of wealth is too often that it is distasteful, socially lowering and militating against the ideal of decent usefulness. The scale of values that is known vulgarly as "keeping up with the Joneses" is really a pale proletarian emulation of what the top social elite have taken for granted for centuries. Nevertheless, it does sum up a complex and subtly graduated yardstick against which an individual's respectability can be swiftly measured.

Shrewd advertisers are able to use these attitudes in order to sell their consumer goods. The tragedy here is that the individual can be seeking some personal fulfillment through the ownership of things, an ambition that can lead to inexhaustible anti-climax.

The dominating drives and motives of life under capitalism are given by profit, property and money values. Human activity is swamped by the activity of society the world over about production for profit and the further accumulation of property. Under capitalism, it is commercialism and the commodity that gives the possibilities and sets the limits to human activities. Commodity production characterises his social values, his aspirations, his morality, his sense of the ideal. Capitalism organises production not primarily about community requirements but about anti-human economic objectives—that is profit. Where property and money form the desirable values of society, these values are bound to be hostile to work since the process of work forms the antithesis of these social ends and is associated with exploitation, social inferiority, poverty and underprivilege.

In his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen, described with cool irony the social mores of the leisure class at about the turn of the century. For example, he writes "Property now becomes the most easily recognised evidence of a reputable degree of success. It therefore becomes the conventional basis for esteem. Its possession in some amount becomes necessary in order to have any reputable standing in the community." "The gentleman of leisure consumes freely and of the best, in food, drink, narcotics, shelter, services, ornaments, apparel, weapons and accoutrements, idols or divinities. Since the consumption of these more excellent goods is an evidence of wealth, it becomes honorific, and conversely, the failure to consume in due quantity and quality becomes a mark of inferiority and demerit." Veblen talks about the honour and esteem that attaches to "industrial exemption," or in more straightforward talk, the privilege of idleness. It is to Veblen that we owe such phrases as "conspicuous consumption" and "pecuniary emulation", and although he was writing more than 50 years ago, his book still applies basically as a description of property values.

Although there is some evidence that these attitudes are weakening or at least are under attack, it is still fairly commonplace for a member of the audience at a Socialist meeting to daydream about the possession of two Rolls Royce motor cars, 500 suits and a life lived lying on the beach at Cannes. Such fantasies can never be taken seriously as an expression of man's "nature" that prevents the establishment of a free society where distribution of goods is by free access. They are prejudices that arise directly from the envy and dissatisfactions of poverty and underprivilege in a capitalist society. Anybody who is sick and tired of the frustrations of trying to make ends

continued bottom next page

RACE

The June issue of the Socialist Standard
will be specially enlarged and will be
mainly devoted to the Race Question

THE PASSING SHOW

Free blood

You walk in and sit down. You are called to a table, where a man in a white coat pricks your finger for a test. Then you lie on a bench and hand the bottle you've been given to a nurse. About twenty minutes later they have a pint of your blood in the bottle and you are drinking a cup of tea. Not long after that you're back at work (that's the worst part of it—the rest is not at all a bother).

This is the typical routine at a blood donor session, and such is the demand for blood, that your pint may be used within a matter of hours. This is one of the sobering facts surrounding the National Blood Transfusion Service in England, and probably one which prompts many workers to give their life fluid every few months.

In this country there is no money in it

for you, merely a small certificate or badge in recognition of your services. Equally there are no strings attached or compulsion, yet thousands of people donate at regular intervals and give it no more thought than going to bed or any other day-to-day function. No doubt the prospect of an hour off from the monotony of their work and the chance to see other faces are factors, but I think there is something more to it than that.

Here is perhaps just a faint glimpse of human beings doing something for each other without the prospect of "gain" in the sense that it is meant today, but equally without fear of injury to themselves in the process. Under such conditions it is too much to feel that perhaps many of them get a real sense of satisfaction such as they rarely encounter in their workaday lives? The eagerness with which they give their blood suggests maybe a sense of relief at being able to act for a brief spell without the normal restrictions which capitalism imposes,

although they are not conscious of its reason.

Peace time war training

It is about as near to a "harmony of interests" that capitalism will ever let you go, because apart from odd moments like these, you are in constant competition with your fellow man. And even in this sphere, capitalism has a degrading effect, for as fast as blood is collected in one place, it is shed even faster on the roads at home and in places farther afield like the trouble spots of Malaysia, Cyprus and Aden.

This is the background against which to view the efforts of the devoted doctors and nurses of the blood bank. It seems you just can't win while capitalism is with us.

Capitalism causes wars, big and small. That is a simple statement of fact, but it has many implications. You should not,

ATTITUDES ABOUT WORK Continued from previous page

meet and is burdened by obligations to wage employment that consume his entire life may well dream about limitless ownership and endless leisure in the sun. The consequences of these aspirations in a worker only confirm his poverty position and make his continued drudgery inevitable, for in the working class, these become the values of self-denial.

The anti-work attitude generated by property values that glamourises consumption, leisure and social uselessness is an aspect of the ideological grip of capitalism over society; it is part of man's adulation of property and underlines the difference between the social ends of capitalism and socialism.

Under capitalism the privileges of class ownership of wealth dominate community requirements. In the face of this monopoly of wealth, the needs of the social majority take second place. The class relations of capitalism prevent the whole community from becoming the rational master of production and distribution. Thus under capitalism, the working class serves the capitalist class and society must accept the narrowly limiting economic laws of the system.

With Socialism, wealth becomes stripped of the mystical powers that it now has to confer prestige, approbation and, allegedly, happiness, upon its possessors. Socialism is a propertyless society, and with its establishment man has outgrown the assertion of individuality through the ownership of property, and in line with this, there will take place a reorientation of social values. By holding wealth in common, there can be no struggle taking place within the community over property. Work will not be seen as the hall-mark of social underprivilege, militating against the ideals of ownership and idleness. On the contrary individuality under socialism will be expressed in the creative contribution made by the individual through society by his work effort. The content of individuality under socialism will be extended not by power over property, but by stretching self-development and personal ability. Work under Socialism becomes the means whereby

men realise their humanity, individually and socially: it is a dignified, useful and ennobling human activity. Under capitalism man denies himself because he is in love with property: under Socialism, man is in love with himself.

P.L.

Monday 3rd May, 8 pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. WC2

"WAR ON POVERTY" IN AMERICA

Speaker: L. Fenton (USA)

Thursday, 6th May, 8 pm

HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL

CHALLENGE OF SOCIALISM

Speakers: C. May, W. Waters

DEBATE WITH LIBERALS

Hackney Trades Hall, Valette Street
(facing Hackney Empire)

Wednesday, 26th May, 8 pm

"SOCIALISM IS MORE RELEVANT TO SOCIAL NEEDS THAN LIBERALISM"

For SPGB: H. Baldwin

For Liberals: To be announced.

for instance, run away with the idea that war is something which bursts like a thunderclap over a largely unprepared and unsuspecting world, for such are the conditions of modern capitalism that there is plenty of suspicion between the powers, even while they are professing undying friendship, and they are never entirely unprepared.

They are constantly training their forces and developing their weapons of death and destruction, and where they get the chance, they will give them a tryout under operating conditions. Thus they gain valuable data for future modifications in time for the bigger showdowns to come. Such was the case during the Spanish Civil War for example, when some of the major powers sent arms and "volunteers" to one side or the other and noted their effects. Then there was the Korean episode, when the British *Centurion* tank was in action and later underwent alterations as a result.

Now this is not to say that Spain and Korea were just glorified weapon testing grounds. Obviously there were very real capitalist interests at stake which caused the flareups and put the men and weapons there in the first place. But they are also regarded as useful training grounds, although this is not something that statesmen and politicians will normally care to admit. However, sometimes we may get a glimpse of cynical candour as one or another of them shoots his mouth off, like Lord Mountbatten, thus:

This is war, but is a very small form of war... We are being shot at but really it is the most marvellous training that our forces ever had... (speaking on the Malaysian situation in New Zealand March 4th.)

Out of the horse's mouth indeed. Obviously Lord Mountbatten does not think that the "marvellous training" will be wasted. No doubt it will come in handy to protect British capitalism's interests elsewhere when this little crisis blows over, and for that very reason then as now, workers will get killed or horribly maimed. It's a man's life in the Army.

Infernal combustion engines

A friend of mine runs a small shop on the outskirts of Watford. Apart from his shop and a few others, the road is lined with houses on both sides almost for its entire length. Most of the houses and

shops have been there for many years, so there has been little change in the size or appearance of the road in all that time. But there has been one big change in another respect which terrifies the wits out of me every time I walk along that road.

Time was when the shop door could be left open on a warm day in Summer. But that was some years ago, before the road became a feeder to the M.1. Now, the stink and deafening noise of huge lorries and countless cars have made a nightmare of the place, especially in the rush hour. So, Winter and Summer alike, the shop door stays closed and if you walk along the narrow pavement (laid long before the car became the monster it is today), you need eyes in the back of your head to get you home in one piece. Probably all that has saved the road from complete destruction is the construction of M.1 extension into London a few miles away, due for opening in the near future.

The problem of the roads was growing before the second world war, but it is in the post war years that it has threatened to get out of hand and has been such a headache for the capitalist class of Britain and other countries. One gets the impression that some of them would like to see some sort of restrictions imposed, but the car industry has now assumed such importance in modern capitalist economy, that they will not attempt anything to hamper its growth to any great extent. What this holds in store for us in terms of ripping up the countryside and the deterioration of already ugly places remains to be seen.

It is of course very convenient in many ways to have a car nowadays, but more than that—for many workers it is a positive necessity by the very nature of their employment. It is indicative of the demand to move ever faster in the world of capitalist competition, where time is money and every second counts.

So the politician who takes over the administration of modern capitalism will have to make big allowances for the automobile in his electoral calculations, whatever his personal feelings. Greater London Council Member Mrs. Peggy Jay (wife of Douglas) may shout about proposed "box" of motorways for London, and tell of the destruction of living space, and about ten thousand trees, which it may well entail, but she will not get much support from the electorate at large. For the system which she supports has produced the motorised worker of the sixties, dominated by his machine and hating anyone who denies him the right

to drive it where he likes, even in some places onto the sea shore to the very edge of the waves.

Crackpot? indeed yes, but just another of those problems that only a private property system can produce.

Gaspers

"... The Conservative Party should not be afraid of inequality." (Mr. Du Cann, Tory Party Chairman, 27.3.65.)

"This is not an attack on profits." (Mr. Brown, defending Labour Government's budget 7.4.65.)

"My first job is to maintain political stability and if I have to detain ten or twenty thousand, I will do it." (Dr. Banda at a Blantyre rally on 4.4.65.)

"The days of nuclear war are gone." (Mao Tse Tung to Arab Leaders in Peking, reported 6.4.65.)

"Businessmen have more hope of making progress and money under a Labour Government than they had before." (Mr. Brown in an interview with the editor of *Director*, Institute of Directors Journal, April 1965.)

"We do not care what colour a person's skin is. It is just that we do not want any more coloured people in Marshall Street." (Mrs. Groves of Smethwick after a deputation meeting with the Housing Minister 8.4.65.)

E.T.C.

MANCHESTER

A Meeting has been arranged at **CHORLTON TOWN HALL (Committee Room), CAVENDISH STREET, ALL SAINTS, MANCHESTER, 15, on Sunday, 9th May, 2 p.m.—4.30 p.m.** Central Branch members and sympathisers are invited to attend. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss ways and means of improving Socialist propaganda in the North West, particularly in and around the Manchester area, and the possibility of holding public meetings with the help of Party speakers and the co-operation of the Party Propaganda Committee.

It is appreciated that the date and time of the meeting will not be convenient to everybody, but the arrangement of the meeting has been rather difficult because of the shortage of suitable halls in Manchester. It is however, hoped that all those interested will do their utmost to attend and make the meeting a success.

Any further enquiries should be made to the Manchester Group Secretary, 4 St. Martins Road, Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale, Cheshire. (Phone: Pyramid 2404).

NEWS IN REVIEW continued from page 80

manner of horrors to flourish uncon-
demned, seems to convince many people
that war is really a comfortable, humane
occupation for gentlemen.

It was this combination of fear and
hypocrisy which caused the storm over
the American gas attacks in Vietnam.
The United States government protested
that they would not dream of using such
barbaric methods of warfare (at the time
they were busily dropping napalm bombs)
and that the gas was really harmless stuff
which any government might use against
strikers or demonstrators.

The only comment to make on this is
that it may be true. And then again it
may not. No government—especially
one which has such widespread interests
and involvements as Washington—thinks
twice about lying when it suits its pur-
pose, and purposes are particularly open
to being suited in wartime.

Gas warfare has one great thing to
commend it to the designers of

capitalism's war machine. It destroys
human beings but it does not damage
property. The only snag, from their point
of view, is that ways of delivering the
stuff have to be found, and that these will
be attacked by the other side with all the
old methods of destruction—high ex-
plosives, incendiaries, nuclear missiles—
which means that property is going to
suffer after all.

There is no way out of it. War is not
going to become a humane business. Even
a comparatively small affair like the
struggle in Vietnam can call into use
some ghastly methods of dealing out
death and destruction.

It is futile to expect capitalism to take
a step backwards and humanise its wars
—futile to expect a great power to throw
away powerful, and possibly dominating,
weapons. The people who have protested
over the use of gas in Vietnam—many of
them are the usual weary crowd of
"Progressives"—are once more turning
their backs on the facts of capitalist life.

This is a dangerous habit. Capitalism
has a way of making us face facts—and
plenty of equipment with which to do it.

posed to have on the British economy.
But while they predict in one breath that
a certain tax will operate in a certain
way, they have to admit in the next that
the whole thing is unpredictable.

For example, Alan Day in *The
Observer*:

... very large tax increases ... are
needed if the Government wants both to
slow down inflation and to keep up a
more reasonable pace of expansion of
output.

And in the same article:

The authors of last week's Economic
Report were clearly bewildered by the task
even of explaining what happened last year
... Any judgement about this year's
developments must involve a high degree
of uncertainty.

For example, Richard Fry in *The
Guardian*:

... the Chancellor must devise his tax
claims so that the total effect will have
just the right impact on demand, produc-
tion, and employment over the coming
year. That is always a delicate and chancy
operation and it will be harder than usual
this year.

This confusion persists, even after the
Budget is out. Mr. Callaghan himself, in
a television interview, admitted that he
was not sure what the result of his Budget
would be and that he could only hope his
sums and forecasts would turn out right.

Nobody pointed out the obvious, that
capitalism is a chaotic social system
which cannot be planned or budgeted or
controlled.

Workers, also, are confused by
Budgets. They are convinced that what
the Chancellor decides will have a signifi-
cant effect on their livelihoods. In fact,
with or without tax, everyone who has to
work for a living gets a wage which is
generally enough to reproduce their
working energies and abilities.

Taxation is really a concern of the
capitalist class. They are the class who
need the vast State machine, the armed
forces and their costly weapons. It is in
their interests that State medical and
social services are run. They are the
only class who can afford to bear the
immense tax burden.

These facts are not generally accepted.
Budgets are excellent subjects for the
customary political shadow-boxing
between the Labour and Conservative
parties, and this year's was no exception.
But no Budget has ever had more than
a negligible effect upon the lives of the
mass of the people. Their poverty and
problems have deeper roots.

The Budget

Budget Day is usually the occasion for
a certain amount of clowning about on
the part of the Chancellor of the
Exchequer. Some of this is undoubtedly
stimulated by the newspapers' anxiety to
unearth what they call a human story
behind the impersonally vast amounts of
money with which the Chancellor juggles.

Thus there was Mr. Heathcoat Amory
feeding the birds on his window sill.
There was Mr. Maudling's comely young
daughter suddenly bursting to fame as a
film starlet after the press had discovered
her. And this year there was Mr.
Callaghan's new dispatch box—symbolis-
ing, he promised us, a new era in the
Treasury.

After this it came as no surprise when
the Chancellor chose the old faithfuls of
tobacco and alcohol to bear increased
taxes. These are two of the fields where
government control has established near-
monopoly conditions, which enables
prices to be high enough for the State to
skim off a nice, creamy dollop of tax.

Many of the Budget's extra imposts
were widely forecast by the financial
journalists. These "experts" get their
living by discussing the effects which the
government's financial policies are sup-

MEETINGS

STEVENAGE

Red Lion, High St., Old Stevenage
Mondays, 8 pm

3rd May

THE LABOUR PARTY

Speaker: A. Fahy

17th May

TAPE RECORDING:

EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY

Speaker: Reid

WELWYN

Community Centre
Mill Green Rd., Welwyn Gdn. City
Thursday, 20th May, 8 pm

ART AND SOCIETY

Speaker: R. Lloyd

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 pm
East Street, Walworth,
May 2nd and 16th (11 am)
May 9th and 30th (noon)
May 23rd (1 pm)

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Wednesdays

Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers St.) 8 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm

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It is unfortunate, to say the least, that
most workers ignore this, preferring to
spend their time grumbling about a few
pennies on or off beer, fags and the other
consolations of their drab existence.

Ku-Klux-Klan

One of the results of the much-
publicised Civil Rights activities in Selma,
Alabama, and the murder of a white
woman civil rights worker, has been to
focus attention on that grotesque body
the Ku-Klux-Klan.

The excesses of this gang of bigots and
racketeers are too well known to need
repeating, but they are probably nearing
the end of the road. A mere shadow of
their former selves, although still a
murderous shadow, President Johnson's
violent attack on them, and the Congres-
sional Committee of Investigation, that
looks as if it means business, will prob-
ably finish them off.

After all, a powerful modern state like

the U.S.A. cannot tolerate an Invisible
Empire within its boundaries, that defies
its laws and holds it up to contempt.

Perhaps just as important, this is a
world in which a large number of in-
dependent states with predominately
coloured populations exist, and are grow-
ing in importance. These have economic,
political and military value to the United
States, particularly as other powerful
States are looking for opportunities to
muscle in. American Capitalists do not
want visiting diplomats or businessmen to
be insulted or threatened because of their
skin colour.

The Ku-Klux-Klan, with its lunatic
mumbo-jumbo, with its Imperial Wizards,
Exalted Cyclops, Klokards, Klokams and
Nighthawks, to quote just a few, its pass-
words, bloodoaths and burning crosses,
sound like an exaggerated form of such
harmless but futile organisations as the
Freemasons and the Buffalo's.

Except that its purpose is terrorism. It
is amazing that anyone should take it
seriously, but the grim fact is that in its
hey-day its membership ran into

million's. Its childish costumes and
antics make it sound like a schoolboy
game or a joke, but it was no joke to the
victims of its obscene brutality.

Based on an organisation that arose in
the bitter aftermath of the American Civil
War, and which flourished for only about
three years during the Reconstruction
period before being disbanded, the KKK
was resurrected in the early years of this
century.

Anti; foreigners, Jews, Catholics and
Negroes, it appealed to the worst
prejudices and the ignorance of the
American working class. From time to
time it has ridden on waves of hysteria to
national importance, but most of the time
its power has been more local. In the
1930's it added Communists and "labour
agitators" to its list of victims.

The progress of the Klan has been
marked by a trail of misery. Murder,
mutilation, flogging and branding have
been amongst its methods, and although
its end is probably in sight, as the time-
bombs of Alabama show, it looks like
making a bloody exit.

ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF JUSTICE

Locke, who, like the philosophers of the
17th and 18th centuries, used the deductive
method employed in geometry, came to
think that private property engendered the
idea of justice. In his "Human Understand-
ing" he expressly says that "Where there is
no property there is no injustice, is a propo-
sition as certain as any demonstration in
Euclid: for the idea of property being a
right to anything, and the idea to which the
name injustice is given being the invasion or
violation of that right, ..."

If the idea of Justice, as Locke thought,
can only appear after and as a consequence
of private property, the idea of theft, or
rather the tendency to take unthinkingly
what one needs or desires, is on the con-
trary, well developed, before the institution
of private property. The communistic savage
and barbarian behave in regard to material
goods as our savants and writers do in
regard to intellectual goods: whenever they
find them they take them, to use Molière's
expression. But this natural custom becomes
theft, crime, from the time when common
property is replaced by private property.

Into the head and heart of savages and
barbarians common property put ideas and
sentiments which bourgeois Christians, those
sad results of private property, will find very
strange.

Heckwelder, a Moravian missionary who
in the 18th century lived fifteen years among
North American savages, not yet corrupted
by Christianity and bourgeois civilisation,

said:

"The Indians believe that the Great Spirit
created the world and all that it contains for
the common good of men; when he stocked
the earth and filled the woods with game, it
was not for the advantage of some, but of
all. Everything is given in common to the
children of men. Everything that breathes
on the earth, everything that grows in the
fields, everything that lives in the rivers and
waters, belongs jointly to all, and everyone
has a right to his share.

From a lecture by Paul Lafargue on *Ideal-
ism and Materialism*. SOCIALIST STANDARD,
May 1915.

OLD PEOPLE IN AMERICA

It was reported in *The Guardian* (March
19th, 1965) that the recent Russian space
success is going to spur America on in the
race to be the first to put a man on the
moon. The cost of this project is estimated
at between £7,000 millions and £14,000
millions.

A few days after this was announced, a
film was shown by the BBC television of
the plight of the aged people in America.
Doctors run nursing homes as businesses,
and some of them who were interviewed on
television admitted that at present there was
a boom in nursing homes. Elderly people
who have no relatives to look after them go

to these homes and have to hand over all
their possessions—insurances, cash and
(according to the commentator) their
personal effects such as jewellery, wedding
rings etc.

If they could afford it they had a room to
themselves costing about £50 a week, but the
majority had to share a room with as many
others as could be packed in. Naturally they
were fed inadequately, in the hope that they
would not be too long dying. Medical atten-
tion was only obtainable if they could afford
it, and doctors' fees were so high that this
was impossible for most of them. The
elderly, according to this BBC report, were
being pillaged mercilessly.

It is more important to capitalism to land
a man on the moon than to look after the
aged who have given their energies in a
lifetime of exploitation. Now that they can-
not work and continue to make profits for
capitalism, they can go on to the human
scrap heap. Who cares?

H. JARVIS.

The WESTERN SOCIALIST

Journal for Socialism
in the
U.S.A and Canada

64 monthly

NEWS IN REVIEW

Unions to heel

The time when the Attlee government were in office was the heyday of the unofficial strike. The reason was that very often an unofficial action was the only method of pushing a wage claim; whatever the official union leaders were compelled to do at the negotiating table, in public many of them championed the wage-restraint policy of the Labour government.

Since then, times have not been so good for the wildcat striker. The official strike has come back into respectability.

The Wilson government did not find the unions so docile. On the very night of Labour's victory last October, TUC General Secretary George Woodcock made it plain that he still thought the unions' first job was to stand out for their members' interests, independent if need be from government policy.

But it was predictable that some union leaders should decide that, simply because Labour is in power, the economic fortunes of the employers should come first.

Last March Mr. John Boyd, who is on the executive of both the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Labour Party, appealed to the annual women's conference of his union for "... sympathetic understanding, co-operation, discipline and restraint ..."

The moderates have an even more impressive convert. Mr. Ted Hill of the Boilermakers, who was once the *enfant terrible* of the unions' left wing, wrote in his union journal last January that unions should help the TUC to reduce strikes and restrictive practices: "If there is likely to be a demarcation dispute, submit the matter to arbitration ... if there is likely to be a strike, take the matter through procedure before taking strike action."

Are the unions, then, tamed? Will they give up the struggle for better wages and conditions? On the contrary, the pressures of capitalism will themselves show up the words of men like Boyd and Hill for the wishful thinking that they are. For example the AEU women, just like the Labour Party women before them, have demanded equal pay. All the time, the more usual type of wage claim is coming in, as inevitable as tomorrow's dawn.

This is not surprising. During Labour's first three months of office the Official Index Retail Prices which, whatever, its deficiencies is some sort of guide in these

matters, rose by about one and a half per cent. This means that the buying power of the pound, taken as twenty shillings when Labour came into office, had fallen to 19s. 8d. by last January.

The working class cannot afford to ignore such factors as this. Rising prices mean a decline in living standards, unless they are balanced out by a rise in wages. Apart from that, there are other things which ensure that the working class will carry on the struggle to improve their wages and working conditions.

This is an inevitable by product of the basic employer/employee relationship of capitalism, which as long as it lasts will always produce strikes and other disputes.

This situation will not be abolished, nor even changed, by speeches and resolutions, nor by the breathtaking manoeuvres of union leaders who are left wing firebrands when the Tories are in office and who disappoint their deluded followers by becoming staid right wingers when Labour takes over.

Art, for whose sake?

An essential part of the popular British conception of an American millionaire is that he is a vulgar Philistine who yet likes to flaunt his wealth by buying up famous works of art which mean nothing to him.

It follows from this that, whenever a rich American buys a famous picture, or piece of sculpture, over here, and wants to take it back home, there are protests on all sides.

This is what happened when Mr. Norton Simon bought Rembrandt's picture of his son, *Titus*, at Christie's. The protests were all the stronger because Mr. Simon appeared to have put in his successful bid after the auctioneer's hammer had come down for the last time.

The press reports of what they called this "dramatic" incident inspired many workers whose usual experience of artistic enjoyment is confined to studying the Maidenform Bra adverts on the Underground to assume a sudden knowledge of the intricacies of top rank auctions.

Everyone seemed to be agreed that it would be a calamity if *Titus* left this country. In some ways it was reminiscent of the hooah over da Vinci's *Madonna and Child*; there were attempts to stop the Board of Trade granting an export

licence for *Titus*, appeals to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide for repurchasing the picture in his Budget, schemes to raise the £798,000 needed to buy it back. A simple soul would have assumed from this that *Titus* was a British picture, and that there had been long queues of art-hungry people to view it. In fact Rembrandt was, of course, a Dutchman, which, on the protestors' own arguments, means that the Dutch are the only people who have a right to be annoyed about the affair.

Then again, the picture had not been open to public viewing but had been part of a rich Englishman's collection in the Channel Islands. (Were the Dutch annoyed when *Titus* was originally bought out of Holland?)

Nationalism is never logical, but it is blatantly stupid when it works up its ire over the artistic products of another country.

Most of the people who were indignant over the Rembrandt picture can never have come remotely near to seeing it when it was in the Cooks' private collection. At any rate, Mr. Simon intended it for wider enjoyment than that; he planned to show it at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Indignation would be better directed against a social system in which works of art can be bought and sold, and bargained for, and be the subject of nationalistic emotions. Rembrandt, who died in neglected squalor, might have been bitterly amused by it all.

Gas in Vietnam

The world has never recovered from the shock of the first gas attacks on the Western Front in 1915, and the sense of shock has been in no way lessened by the knowledge that there were many other horrors borne of that war.

Why the shock should have been so intense and so longlasting has never been adequately explained. It persists today, although there is no gas which inflicts a worse death than napalm, or the fringes of a nuclear flash, or indeed many other of the ghastly machines which capitalism has invented and developed to a high degree of efficiency to prosecute its wars.

Poison gas is outlawed by what are called the international rules of war something which, although it allows all

Continued on page 79

Socialist Standard

Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland

Socialists emphatically repudiate racism. No one group of people is inately superior to another. From the earliest times mankind have been continually intermingling to the benefit of the whole human race. The interest of all workers throughout the world is the same—the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by socialism. Away with the barriers of nationality and the prejudice of race, and unite for socialism.



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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Where we stand

Socialists advocate a world where the whole of humanity is united about social relationships of equality and co-operation. The identity of the Socialist even now is not with any national grouping, brand of religion, any alleged "race" or local culture. The Socialist has no loyalties to Britain or America, to Protestantism or Catholicism, to white men or brown men, to Welsh culture or African culture. By his perspective of history, by his knowledge of the economic nature of modern society, the Socialist has gone beyond the shallow allegiances that misdirect the attitudes of those who are still burdened by nationalism, religion or racism. Our argument is that if the majority were Socialists, the security of all men in material comfort in a world of harmony and freedom would at last become a reality.

It is true that the world picture of racism at present is gloomy; it is a running sore of a problem, frequently accompanied by outbursts of physical violence. Apart from its form as widespread prejudice, in some parts of the world it is still maintained as official government policy. Although it is the product of different historical conditions, and although up to now the South African Government has not begun to build gas chambers, *apartheid* is in direct descent from the Gestapo's "final solution". Racism may be dormant in Hamburg, but its ugliness has reappeared in Smethwick and Notting Hill.

Socialists have no hesitation in taking a stand. We condemn racism. To us it is repugnant. We are opposed to any attitude that discourages the unity of the working class. Even so, our disgust is extended by an understanding of the problem. Disgust without knowledge is impotent. The racists of Johannesburg, Salisbury, Birmingham Alabama or Birmingham, England, are not inherently evil men. They are men who are moved by fear, insecurity, frustration and ignorance, all of which are attitudes conditioned by social forces. The working class of Smethwick have a social history of struggle and insecurity. They are on the defensive, they are anxious to protect jobs, a standard of living, a standard of housing, that they feel has been hard won. Mere condemnation will not help them. They have to realise that they are victims of a universal situation that impinges on members of the working class wherever they exist.

What workers really want, whether they hail from Jamaica, Pakistan or Smethwick is the security of material comfort. This cannot be achieved by engaging in racist struggles that only add hatred and the nightmare of strife and violence to enduring frustrations. They must realise that they are denied this because the means of wealth production and distribution are owned by a minority class, who exploit this ownership and the labour power of the workers for the purpose of profit making.

All workers, whatever their skill and capability, have a common identity and a common interest not as Jamaicans, Pakistanis or Brummies, but as members of the working class. Their common problems can only be resolved, not by squalid differences between themselves, but by a confrontation between a united working class and the owners of the means of wealth production—the capitalist class.

The world's workers must destroy this private monopoly of the means of wealth production and convert it to the common property of the whole of man. Only then can social integration, co-operation, equality and freedom be realised where it really matters, in the production and distribution of wealth, in meeting the world community's material requirements.

Socialists will continue to show that there are no differences between men that prevent the establishment of a society where the human family can live in harmony and co-operation. We shall continue to show that "race" is a myth, that racism is sterile hysteria containing much that is painfully disrupting and nothing that is of material advantage to the working class. Racism is at war with everything that Socialists want.



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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4, at 7.30 p.m.

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WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

The myths of race

A FEW years ago, an American professor created three fictitious races, gave them names, habits and customs and asked people what they thought of them. A large proportion of those tested were hostile to the non-existent races, and thought that they should be restricted. This is typical of the confusion which surrounds the subject of Race; confusion inspired at the best by misunderstanding and at the worst by calculated malice. A man will be dispassionately scientific when he is talking about the differences between his dog and his neighbour's, but he will be exactly the opposite when he is discussing the differences between his neighbour and himself, if the neighbour happens to have a coloured skin. The very word Race is distorted and misused more than most others. It is, for example, common to hear talk about the White Race, the Aryan Race, the British Race—all of which are different, indeed contradictory, ways of using the word.

A first step in clearing this confusion is to realise that the word Race is useful only in so far as it is restricted to a concept in the science of biology. It cannot be used for a political, or sociological, or historical, concept—although this happens too often.

Biology is concerned with the study of life and its processes, their classification and reduction, to order. The basis of the system of classification was laid down in the eighteenth century by the Swedish botanist Linnaeus; from this basis an efficient system has been evolved. Millions of distinct species—some living, some extinct—have now been defined, and their relationships with other species identified. And the work is still going on.

This system of classification originally depended wholly upon physical characteristics—stature, type of hair, skin colour and so forth. The rise of other sciences—of genetics (the study of heredity) and biochemistry (the chemistry of living organisms) in the present century has provided other means, which may turn out to be more useful.

The basic unit of biological classification is the species—a unit, of plants or animals, which can interbreed and so can form a single, natural breeding population. All existing men and women belong to the species *homo sapiens*. But as we all know, human beings, just like any other species, are not all exactly alike. The physical differences between, say, a Senegalese Negro and a fair haired, blue eyed Swede are all too obvious; they are, moreover, differences which have been inherited and which can be passed on to another generation.

It is clear, then, that the human race can be divided, on the basis of physical characteristics, into subspecies—into races. A race, says one biologist, is "a group of related intermarrying individuals, a population which differs from other populations in the relative commonness of certain hereditary traits." But when we try to elaborate on this we encounter some important questions which show up our original proposition in a rather more doubtful light.

We meet these questions immediately we try to divide people on the basis of their colour. Any large gathering of "white" people is bound to include a variety of skins, from chalky white (considered to be very undesirable!) to swarthy. Any large gathering of Negroes will include many whose skins are not black, but varying shades of brown, some of them actually lighter than many of those who are considered "white". Many "white" people have physical traits—a heavy mouth, a flat nose, fuzzy hair—which are supposed to be the identifying marks of a Negro and many Negroes have physical traits which are supposed to be exclusive to "whites".

We can extend the questions even farther. Where do we fit

in those people in South East Asia, such as the Malays, who appear to be the result of a cross between "brown" and "yellow" ancestors? Then, outside the field of skin colour, how do we classify the white Europeans who show clear evidence of racial mixing—for example those who bear remnants of the periodical raids into Europe, centuries ago, by the Mongolian hordes? There are many more such questions which, although they do not deny that differences exist between people, expose the absurdity of laying down rigid lines upon which mankind can be divided.

It is not surprising, then, that the very scientists who have tried to classify man should produce such widely differing estimates of the number of races into which he can be divided. Linnaeus said that there were three; Morton thirty-two; Crawford sixty-two; Gliddon one hundred and fifty. It is also not surprising that the same difficulty has afflicted those whose interest in the matter is anything but scientific.

In the United States there has always been confusion over the legal definition of a Negro. In Maine in 1852 a person having one-sixteenth "African blood" was held not to be a Negro for the purposes of intermarriage. In 1910 in Louisiana a coloured person was defined as anyone who had "an appreciable amount of Negro blood." (What is an "appreciable amount"?) The Official Census in 1890 applied the term "Black" only to those who had three-quarters or more "black blood". The 1920 Census tried to distinguish between "full blooded" Negroes (who were classed as "Black") and those having a proportion of "white blood" (who were returned as "Mulattoes"). The 1930 Census instructed its enumerators to return as Negro those having one half or more "Negro blood"; by the Census of 1940 anyone of mixed white and Negro parentage was classed as Negro.

The definition of Negro varies from state to state. Some (Alabama and Arkansas) say that anyone having Negro ancestors, however remote, is coloured. Others define their non-white population according to the amount of "black blood" in them; of these states, Florida and Louisiana require one-sixteenth, Mississippi and Maryland one-eighth. Thus a person in Louisiana whose Negro ancestors ended with his great-great grandfather is classed as coloured. But he can legally change into a white man simply by moving across the border into Mississippi, which sets the limit at his great-grandfather.

Before the war the Nazis conveniently modified their ideas of racial purity so that their Italian and Japanese allies could be included in the Master Race. The South African government (whose official, legal definition says that a white person is anyone who is "generally accepted" as such) has for commercial reasons admitted the Japanese into the "White" ranks, although at present the Chinese are excluded.

Whatever the race maniacs say, a "pure" race is almost an impossibility; it could only exist among a few small isolated groups who by virtue of their remoteness have been able to inbreed for generations. Man has spread all over the Earth during his life, and wherever he has gone he has interbred, swamping any "pure" races that may have existed. There is hardly a country—certainly there is no modern country—which is not now a racial melting pot. To talk, therefore, of Race as something which is rigidly definable is nonsense. To support such theories with a political policy of discrimination, suppression and extermination is pernicious.

But in face of all the facts the racists carry on; one of their most popular arguments today is that Negroes are mentally inferior to white people, and that the white race has been

responsible for all the cultural achievements of the modern world. One of the happy hunting grounds of such theorists are the intelligence tests which have been carried out in the United States, and which usually show the Negro scoring lower than the white person.

Even if we accept the validity of I.Q. tests as a measure of mental capacity, it does not follow from their results that the Negroes are inferior. To begin with, we must take account of the fact that nowhere in the United States are educational facilities and opportunities for Negroes equal to those for white children. In the South, where the mass of Negroes still live, the discrepancy is especially wide. Yet even without taking this into account, the fact is the tests have not demonstrated that skin colour has anything to do with intelligence.

One of the most important—and widely quoted—of these tests was one which was given to nearly two million United States Army recruits in 1917/18. Although the results put the Negro at the bottom of the IQ scale, they also showed Negroes from urban areas in the North on average scoring higher than white recruits from some states in the South. Of the other tests, those carried out by S. D. Porteus draw results from many areas of the world, including Hawaii, Australia and parts of Africa. Again, although the coloured people were generally lower, the results were uneven; some of the most primitive groups, for various reasons, actually surpassed other, more culturally advanced groups. In the Fifties, tests on Negro children who had moved from the South to New York City and to Philadelphia showed that their I.Q. went up with the length of time they had been away from the South.

In any case, all of these tests can only have a limited usefulness. Scientists have not been able to devise a means of testing innate mental capacities, and what tests they have devised have not even been able to separate innate from acquired capacities. Some tests, for example, have discovered that Africans who could not readily recognise diagrams and pictures when they were drawn on paper had no difficulty when the same shapes were cut out in the more familiar ivory or leather. Swazi natives were found to be unable to arrange coloured pegs into a simple pattern, although they frequently planted trees in that very same pattern.

The other popular argument—that coloured people are

inferior because their cultural achievements do not match those of the white race—has gathered a certain amount of support from people who claim that North West Europe has alone been responsible for modern civilisation. But the history of the human race started a long time before Europe became civilised; while the people there were still primitive savages, coloured races in parts of what are now India and China had developed civilisations with a high standard of cultural achievement.

These civilisations rose and declined for the very same reasons as those which later allowed and encouraged developments in Europe. Civilisations depend for their life upon many influences—primarily economic, but also geographical, climatic, historical. Where such influences are favourable, settled life can take root and flourish. Where they are not favourable, it is a different story; there are many areas in the world which even the so-called Superior Races cannot tame and which remain deadly wildernesses.

Culture is not something innate, something which human beings are born with. It is something which they acquire, in reaction to their external conditions. These conditions affect people of all colours; some Negroes are undoubtedly culturally backward but then so are the Poor Whites in the American South, and so are the Hillbillies of Kentucky and Tennessee. Not all white countries are in the forefront of modern culture; some are distinctly backward and may soon be overtaken by some of the new African states. Culture is only one of the characteristics man has acquired during his lifetime; it can be acquired by all people, whatever their race or colour. It has nothing to do with man's innate capacities, which are probably not much different now from what they were eighty thousand years ago.

The racist argues against this. At its highest, his case confuses the innate characteristics of man with the acquired. At its lowest, his case is a mass of evasions and distortions, which in the end can only be asserted by oppression. The only way to avoid this morass of confusion is to subject the racist's arguments to a searching examination. This is bound to show them up for the pernicious sham that they are, and to illuminate the fact that there is no reason, in biology or elsewhere, why men of all colours, shapes and sizes should not live in harmony and co-operation.

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Race in Smethwick

Last October the previously little known town of Smethwick, situated, ironically, on the edge of the Black Country, was suddenly shot into the headlines of every national newspaper. The town was described as "England's Little Rock", a "race-hate town", where the electorate were "politically illiterate". All of this because the controversial Councillor Peter Griffiths had unseated Mr. Patrick Gordon Walker at the General Election.

To what extent does racialism exist in Smethwick? What, if anything, gave rise to it? Does it have any basis in fact? To find the answers to these questions it is necessary to first know a little about the conditions in Smethwick which gave rise to the now notorious events of last October.

One of the first things to take attention in the town are the blocks of multi-storey council flats, towering over the slums they are replacing. Many people say that this is evidence of how much better off we are now; that this is progress. But these jerry-built dwellings, with their damp, paper-thin, warped walls and fierce draughts, are deteriorating into slums in about half the time it took for a back-to-back. The case of a man, reported in the local press recently, speaks for itself; he had had to spend the last ten months off work as a result of illness caused by the damp in his new council flat.

This one feature of the town typifies, as nearly as anything does, what sort of a place Smethwick is. Like thousands of other places, it has the thin veneer of the Affluent Society we are always being told about; but underneath there is the same old poverty.

Confronted with this, and other problems, the people of Smethwick looked for, and found, a scapegoat. Not for the first time, collective wrath fell upon a section of the community who are marked off by the colour of their skin. They overlooked the fact that racialism is no answer to inadequate housing, bad schools and social services.

It is unlikely that many Smethwick people are deep-rooted racialists. Undoubtedly, a lot of them trusted the panaceas of the politicians, in the hope that they would solve their problems. Yet with the records of inconsistency held both by Councillor Griffiths and Mr. Gordon Walker, one wonders if they themselves have any idea of how to go about it.

Griffiths has not always been so outspoken about immigration. For him, in the 1959 election the burning issue was that we should all vote in "a Smethwick man for Smethwick", which conveniently ignored the fact that he himself is a Welsh immigrant. However, this did not cut much electoral ice and in 1964 he took advantage of the emotions aroused by the concentrations of immigrants by basing his platform on the

immigrant question. In contradiction to the memorable photograph which once appeared in the local paper, showing his wife chatting over a cup of tea with a Pakistani woman, Griffiths declared that "Smethwick rejects the idea of a multi-racial society".

On the other side, Mr. Gordon Walker had spoken against the Immigration Bill when it was first introduced by the Tories and, although he had decided by 1964 that perhaps immigration control was not such a bad idea after all, he had already lost much support. However, the dissident Labour voters need not have worried. We all know that the Labour Party, now that they are in power, have not only retained the Act they attacked so strongly, but are actually enforcing stricter control than the Tories did.

Smethwick Labour Party are bitter about the whole affair. At their inquest on the election many speeches were made on the reasons for their defeat and on how they propose to win back the constituency. But next to nothing was said about the ways to solve the problems which face people, both white and coloured, in Smethwick and elsewhere.

Smouldering in Southall

"I used to drink at the Eight Bells but I gave it up when the Wogs started going there." The sentiments were depressingly popular, the accent pure County Limerick—two facts which in Southall tell their own story.

For a long time, immigrants of one sort or another have trekked to this drab wedge of suburbia on the far west limb of London. Now established, their accents often flattened out, some of them speak bitterly of the Indians and Pakistanis who have travelled to Southall for the same reasons as they did.

A lot of people here came up from the West Country and Wales between the wars, driven by the slump to seek work in the factories which were attaching themselves to the Great Western Railway line like genes to a chromosome. The Irish too have come, in a slow, persistent stream.

There were few, if any, coloured immigrants until the middle fifties. Then some came to work in a rubber factory, whose hard and unpleasant work made it difficult to compete for labour with other firms. Vacancies in local industry increased the first brown trickle into a flood. Now the Indians and Pakistanis almost monopolise some districts in Southall.

So far there have been no open clashes—nothing to put Southall into the headlines. The local Teds did manage a feeble demonstration outside the rubber factory at the time of Notting Hill but this was easily dispersed. A Sikh temple has been defaced more than once. But on the whole the

Southall population has settled into a brooding resentment. Only occasionally are there small eruptions.

There was one of these over education, when parents protested that their children's schooling was being held up by the presence of immigrant children who could not speak English. Sir Edward Boyle, who was then Minister of Education, came down and smoothed the incident over.

There are continual complaints about the immigrants' behaviour. Some of these seem to be justified; some are due to a misunderstanding of different social habits and some to downright malice. There are the usual grisly rumours—the Asians make a curry of the local cats, they throw all their rubbish into the garden next door.

Southall's housing problem is no worse than any of its neighbours. It has no abject slums like Notting Hill or the Black Country. Perhaps the worst it offers are seedy Victorian terraces and tawdry, featureless council estates. The immigrants have therefore moved into, for them, comparatively genteel areas, some of which are inhabited by owner occupiers who worry about a "fall in the value of property" when coloured people move into their street.

Some of these owner-occupiers, not tied to the district by being a council tenant, have moved out of Southall into the similar wastelands of nearby Greenford or Hounslow. Some have gone farther afield, to the new estates which have sprung up in places like Reading and Camberley. Others have gone farther still, emigrating to Australia, whose official bar on coloured immigration they regard as sensible and progressive. It was one of these who explained on his application to emigrate that he wanted to go to Australia "because there are too many niggers in my street".

Beneath Southall's surface calm, then, potential violence smoulders on. The local branch of the British National Party blows hard on the embers; their propaganda is exceedingly crude but they got nearly three and a half thousand votes in the general election. Last October the Tories played the immigration issue comparatively cool; Labour hung on for dear life and George Pargiter came out with a reduced, now marginal, majority. That may be a clue to a grim future. If the Conservatives decide to plug a Smethwick line in Southall, they could start something which they do not know how to stop.

Some local organisations are doing their best to keep the fires damped down. There is the Indian Workers' Association which, now that the Labour Government has announced its new tough line on immigration, may be questioning the wisdom of its support for Pargiter last October. There are other organisations which run well intentioned multi-racial outings, meant to prove that we are all brothers under our skins. These organisations are touching only the fringes of the problem; if racial trouble ever became really hot in Southall they would be

consumed in the flames with the rest.

Southall is not a pleasant place. It has an ugly industrial sprawl, acres of cramped houses, cheapjack shops and supermarkets. It is near enough to London Airport to have the big jets often screaming over the rooftops. In many ways life here is hard, and it has bred hard working class attitudes, stifling restrictions and anomalies, formidable prejudices. This is an inflammable place and next time, perhaps, there will be the fire.

IVAN (Southall).

Black and white in Brixton

It is surprising how little we sometimes know about what goes on just down the road where we live. Capitalism, with its jungle law of every man for himself, tends to make social relationships impersonal and, even in overcrowded cities, to make people live in isolation. Unless there is an outbreak of violence the coloured people are left to go their own way. Although they live among us, they keep very much to themselves; they are not absorbed.

In the Borough of Lambeth (before GLC) the population at the last census was 223,763. There is no separate figure for immigrants but the Borough is estimated to have between ten and fifteen thousand coloured people. There has not been so much open hostility in Brixton as in some other areas, although many of the first immigrants came here, mainly to Somerleyton and Geneva Roads. It was here in the late 1940's that the fascists started anti-coloured activities, which included the usual horror stories about the appalling conditions coloured people lived in. The fact that most of the places were slums long before any coloured man saw them didn't matter, the insanitary and overcrowded conditions were easily blamed on to the immigrants.

Since those days, more coloured people have arrived and have slowly fanned out into neighbouring roads; most back streets in Brixton now have coloured families. Most of the housing is low standard but conforms to what the "white" working class have accepted for many years. In some of these roads, including Somerleyton and Geneva, the slums are as squalid as any in London. In conditions like these it is very difficult not to sink into despair and to lose the urge to struggle on. Perhaps the worst aspect of the situation is the resigned acceptance of it by its victims.

In a typical house in Geneva Road, one woman pays £5 5s. 0d. for two or three rooms; another pays £3 for one room. Electrical consumer durables have not made much headway in this district; a pile of washing goes from one plastic bowl to another and is "spun" dry by hand. A dozen or so coloured workers interviewed all said

they were satisfied with their housing condition. There were the usual moans about money matters, but no apparent desire to do other than keep plodding.

Asked if they had been victims of prejudice because of their colour their answers were mainly negative. There had been cases of people sitting away from them on trains and buses but no trouble with neighbours and in the local pubs they mixed quite well.

Politics was a subject that brought frowns all round. Both Tory and Labour party met with equal indifference—alas, not the indifference of enlightened rejection.

Trade Unions were joined if they went with the job, which did not seem often. All in all, these coloured workers had attitudes which are pretty common among their "white" counterparts, and the added disadvantage that they lack the traditions and experience of working-class organisation. On the other side of the picture, if there are twenty people studying in the local library's reference room, six at least will be coloured.

In Somerleyton Road, there is a huge wooden hut which stands on a bomb site. It is painted bright pink and is used as a church. From the doorway the ranting of the preacher can be heard ringing out in old revivalist style, while about 25 men, women and children listen unenthusiastically. A few minutes' walk from this place, in a dilapidated basement of a house in Effia Road, there is another church. Their saviour here must be a jazz enthusiast—the singing is lead by a tambourine and has a distinct blues flavour. Prayer meetings are held on a street corner during the warm weather. It seems that in Brixton the coloured workers' preparations for the next life are well in hand, even if this one leaves a lot to be desired.

H.B. (Brixton).

All quiet in Glasgow

Certain historical facts have ensured that racialism has never been prominent in Glasgow. For instance, anti-Semitism rarely shows itself, except in the odd golf club, and even during the Thirties Mosley's sole appearance in the City ended in complete fiasco.

The late arrival of the Jews (mid-19th century) was a help, for this meant that the ancient antagonism so typical on the Continent is absent here. Later on, the importation of Irish religious influences provided other means whereby the frustrations of wage-slavery could be worked off without the presence of any other "races". The roles of "them" and "us" were adequately filled by the Orange and Catholic elements who have been hating one another ever since.

And unless a few pedlars and seamen, could be counted, Afro-Asians were an unusual sight in the City until the early 'Sixties

when, it seemed to the Citizens, a flood of "Paki's" suddenly descended in their midst. This impression was helped by the newcomers finding employment almost exclusively on the Municipal Transport, thereby assuring themselves of a constant place in the public eye, while their habit of taking up group residence gave the impression of whole areas being taken over.

In fact Glaswegians might be surprised to know that compared to Birmingham, which has a similar population of just over a million, Glasgow's immigrants are rather thin on the ground—about 7,000 against Birmingham's 70,000.

The reasons for the low numbers are obvious. Glasgow's unemployed rarely falls below 20,000 while the light industries which can absorb the unskilled immigrant are practically non-existent here. Clydeside is synonymous with heavy engineering and shipbuilding so the demand is for skilled men only and what light industry there is can, in an area where wages are well below the national average, find an abundance of married women to fill any available vacancies.

Anyway, the big problem in Scotland is not immigration but emigration. Around 11,000 left here for overseas in each of the six years between 1958-63 while another 87,000 found work elsewhere in the U.K. during the 1950's. So concerned with this state of affairs are the local Nationalists and Labourites that they don't even have a policy on immigration at all, devoting themselves solely to preventing the mass escape of wage-slaves to other parts!

The Trade Unions have discussed the matter and at the 1962 Conference of the Scottish T.U.C. the Association of Scientific Workers, appropriately enough, moved an anti-racialist resolution which concluded "... no barriers on grounds of race, creed or colour should be erected against those who wish to live and work in this country". The motion was unanimously adopted. Another resolution condemning Apartheid is due to come before the 1965 Conference and doubtless it, too, will carry the day. All of this hardly reflects the attitude of the average union member. As the seconder of the 1962 resolution admitted "... we had to be honest ... there were still some of our own people who had prejudice against a person's race, religion or colour".

So even if Glasgow's record is comparatively clean it must be remembered that the conditions for real prejudice seldom crop up. The immigrants live almost as a separate community and follow their own cultural activities. They aim simply to stick it out for a few years, save enough money, and return home to open a small business. Few intend to stay.

Nor have they added to the local housing or unemployment problems. The ten year residential qualification rules them out for a Council house so they live mainly in tenements which were slums years ago, and the

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Colour mania in the past

COLOUR prejudice, and the classification of people as "superior" or "inferior" simply because of the colour of their skin, is one of the most persistent and pernicious of fallacies. The important thing to remember is that such an attitude is completely modern. It is not something that has existed from the beginning of man's life, and neither is it a deep-rooted human instinct.

Its origins lie a mere three or four hundred years back. No European regarded Genghis Khan or Suleiman the Magnificent as inferior beings, or worried about their colour. And they themselves were "colour-blind;" their murderous and highly efficient armies were multi-racial. The shock troops of the Turkish army, the Janissaries, contained a large number of white men in their ranks. Again, in the 15th Century when Portuguese ships were edging their way around the coast of Africa, they did not consider that the colour of the Continent's inhabitants was important. Anybody who embraced Christianity and fitted into the economic set-up was accepted into the fold. Both Mulattoes and Negroes rose to high positions in Portuguese society. They commanded Portuguese ships, and many became priests, often rising to be high dignitaries of the church. They became interpreters and advisers to native chiefs and to resident Europeans, as well as brokers and merchants. Many settled in Europe, after a successful career of money-making. More important still, many became slave-traders of great importance, feeling no more affinity with negro slaves than a European aristocrat felt for a European peasant.

Certainly prejudices and hatreds of one sort or another have existed for centuries. Religious bigotry, fear and suspicion of strangers, aristocratic contempt for the lower classes, hostility between cities or states, and the bitterness of the merchant classes towards the landed nobility are a few examples. The permutations were endless, but they had nothing to do with colour. The Jews were the object of bitter persecution for many centuries, but this was purely a religious matter, and not racial.

It is to the history of modern Europe that we must turn for an explanation of colour prejudice. For about 300 years Western Europe had it all its own way, and dominated the world. As Europe moved from Feudalism into Capitalism, it went through a period of intense development—technological, military, and political. This gave it an immense advantage over other areas, especially the two great continents of America and Africa, whose inhabitants were in a much earlier stage of development. Ancient empires went down before mere handfuls of Europeans, and the treasure houses of Peru and Bengal were open to these rapacious plunderers. Whole continents were colonised and exploited by these same small nations. This gave rise to ideas about the superiority of the white races. The workers of Europe, slaving away in their dark Satanic mills, were able to console themselves with the thought that they were members of a "Master Race". This gave rise to race theorists whose ideas, suitably simplified, are still trotted out today.

Of course three hundred years is a very short time in over five thousand years of recorded history, and if you apply the test—that military or scientific ability equals superiority—to five thousand years, and not just three hundred, then the white races have come out pretty badly. Race theories are now being put forward again in this country, for example by the British National Party, who are trying to exploit immigration difficulties in Southall. They overlook the fact that the people who formed the spearhead of European expansion—Portuguese, Spaniards and Italians; men like Columbus, Cortez,

Vasco da Gama, and Cabot — were members of what race theorists consider an inferior section of the white races, dubbed by Lapouge, one of the most rabid of racists, as *Homo Alpinus*. You may not be able to have your cake and eat it but race theorists are always trying to.

As conditions change, so we are witnessing the racists shifts in attitude. Not so long ago the Chinese were regarded in a rather patronising manner. Romantic or sinister, mysterious or comical, but definitely inferior. A popular song of the 1920's—*Limehouse Blues*—describes them as "Chinkies". That sinister lot, with their opium dens in a kind of East London hell—any schoolboy, who could afford the price of a Tuppenny Blood knew that they were up to no good. In reality the Chinese of East London were small in number and engaged in the most mundane of occupations. But China, having led the world for most of its history, had temporarily fallen behind. It was divided and militarily weak, a prey to the greed of the European powers, and overshadowed by its pushing neighbour Japan. The Chinese could be regarded with amused tolerance. Today such expressions as "Chinkies" and "Chinaman" have a strange, archaic ring, and it is difficult to realise that they were once in common usage. Today China is a major power with its foot on the nuclear ladder, and is now challenging the U.S.A. or Russia. Chinamen are no longer comical.

But of all race prejudices, one stands out above all others—that against the Negro. An American Negro folk singer summed up the position in a few bitter lines.

If you're White, alright,
If you're Brown, stick around,
But if you're Black, get back—get back—get back.

Unbelievable lengths have been gone to, to keep the image of the Negro as an inferior being, and to write the lie into the sub-conscious mind. One example will suffice. The great folk hero of the 20th century is the cowboy, played against a back-cloth of the legendary West. For fifty years they've galloped across the screens in their thousands. One thing you will never see; a Black Cowboy. But at the time of the great cattle drives, there were estimated to be over five thousand Negroes working as cowboys. This is not surprising, as cattle droving was a dangerous and badly paid job, and Negroes, like other members of the working class including Mexicans and Chinese, worked at it.

Forty years ago in the early Western films all cowboys were whiter than white, while Mexicans, with their nasty faces under their big hats, were the villains. Today Mexicans and Chinese cowboys are portrayed, but the Negro still must not be allowed to be a folk hero. Why does such an attitude exist? The answer lies in one word; Slavery. With the opening of the American Continent there began a gigantic forced migration. The caravels that sailed from West Africa to the New World with their tragic cargo were radically to alter the pattern of world population. They were to make the Negro races second only to Europeans in their dispersion throughout the world. Estimates vary, but certainly many millions of Negroes were transported. Chattel slavery was an ancient institution, it was one of the economic stages through which humanity had passed. But modern slavery was unique.

In slave societies slavery was accepted as part of life, just as wage labour is accepted today. Anyone of any race or religion was liable to be a slave; even a member of a ruling class could be captured in war and enslaved. Slavery was regarded as a misfortune, it was not regarded as a sign of racial inferiority. But there was an important difference about the slavery that

grew up in the modern world, in that the people who practised it had long left slavery behind. Europe had passed out of slavery, through feudalism, and was emerging into Capitalism by the time the Western slave trade got under way. The world was treated to a new spectacle — slave traders who prated of freedom. At least the slavers of ancient Rome or Baghdad had not accompanied their activities with shouts of Liberty and Equality.

After all, the logical conclusion of a belief in liberty is that all men should be free, but the slavers' profits were far too good for that kind of logic. To struggle, and even suffer, for political freedom on one hand, and accept slavery on the other, requires the kind of attitude that can look at a modern dictatorship and call it a Peoples' Democracy. It also needs justification, and the only way the slavers could do this was to convince themselves that the slaves were sub-human, and fit only for slavery. To achieve this end the bottom of the intellectual barrel was scraped, and the Bible as well as pseudo-science were dragged into bolster up the double talk.

But colour mania goes beyond a mere question of skin colour. Race theorists have invented divisions within the "white" races themselves, with colour of hair, eyes and the shade of skin as the "tests". These divisions have been given such names as the Latin, Celtic, Slav or Aryan races. In fact these divisions are purely linguistic, and extremely vague ones at that; they have nothing whatever to do with race. Which of them is held to be inferior or superior depends largely on which group the particular theorist happens to belong to.

Perhaps the most violent and disastrous of all these myths was that of the Aryan, Nordic or Teuton, which reached its ultimate lunacy in Nazi Germany. "Teutons" are, roughly those people living in North West Europe, mainly Germany, Scandinavia, the Low countries and England. They are, according to themselves, the finest flowering of the human race. The "true Teuton" is blond, tall and blue eyed. This is so silly, as a glance at the majority of people in these countries will show, that one would be inclined to dismiss it, if it were not for the terrible example of Nazi Germany. One has only to look at many of the Nazi leaders — including Hitler — to realise the depth of self-deception that the racists can plumb.

The definition of the "true Teuton" is interesting. Every age and civilisation has its ideal type of person, and an ideal conception of beauty. This ideal changes, often from generation to generation, as a study of advertisements, matinee idols and popular magazines over the last half century will show. These ideal types tend to be portrayed in popular literature, art or poetry, in spite of the fact that they bear little or no relationship to the vast majority of people, so that a picture of an age, taken from these sources alone, would be completely deceptive. The "ideal person" of the Vikings and early North Europeans appears to have been tall, blond and blue eyed. All of the "best people" in their sagas and poems, all the gods, heroes, and nobility, are portrayed in this manner. With the rise of German and other European nationalisms these ancient writings were brought out, and it was concluded, quite incorrectly, that all early and therefore "pure" Teutons were; tall, blond and blue eyed.

Workers who profess to support the theories of the racists, should read them a little more carefully. All the race theorists — Gobineau, Lapouge, Houston Chamberlain or Nietzsche to name just a few — had another side to their theories. This was their contempt for the working class. Whatever their differences on other fields they were agreed on this one point. The mere fact of being workers, they thought, marked people out as

lower human types. All the race theorists had axes to grind — German nationalism, British Imperialism, control of emigrants into the U.S.A., and above all aristocratic supremacy. They would not have been at all impressed by such slogans as Keep Brixton White, considering that Brixton, like other working class areas, was fit only for what they called "lower human types" to inhabit.

Race theorists today are unscientific, inconsistent and pernicious. In this, they are carrying on an inglorious tradition, and perpetuating a history of cynical deception.

L. DALE.

Public Meetings

on the race question

ISLINGTON

Thursday, 3rd June, 8 pm
Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd., N7
SOCIALISM HAS NO COLOUR BAR

GLASGOW

Sunday, 13th June, 7.30 pm
Cosmo Cinema, Rose Street
THE RACE QUESTION

CLAPHAM

Monday, 14th June, 8 pm
SPGB, 52 Clapham High St., SW4
SOCIALISM AND IMMIGRATION

SOUTHALL

Tuesday, 22nd June, 8 pm
Shackleton Hall, Lady Margaret Road
(near Town Hall)
SOCIALISM HAS NO COLOUR BAR

HACKNEY

Wednesday, 23rd June, 8 pm
Trades Hall, Vallette Street, E8
(facing Hackney Empire)
NATIONALISM AND RACISM

HAMMERSMITH

Thursday, 24th June, 8 pm
Hammersmith Town Hall
King St., W6
THE MYTH OF RACE

MANCHESTER

Friday 25th June, 7.30 pm
The Meeting Room, International Club
George Street

THE RACE QUESTION speaker: Peter Gill

The roots of race prejudice

IT is all too easy to discover examples of man clinging passionately to ideas which have no basis in fact. One of the most widespread of these ideas at the moment is racial prejudice, a term which conceals a multitude of aberrations all of them based on the notion that some people, in some way, are innately inferior to others.

This comes in different forms at different times. Before the war, when the Nazis were at their work, it took the form of intense anti-Semitism. This was then one of the most prevalent types of racial prejudice, and it was fearfully simple. The Nazis decided that the Jews were less than human and were, therefore, proper subjects for bestial experiments and finally mass extermination. Himmler, for example, put it like this to a gathering of his S.S. generals at Posen in 1943:

Anti-Semitism is exactly the same as delousing. Getting rid of lice is not a question of ideology, it is a matter of cleanliness. In just this same way anti-Semitism for us has not been a question of ideology but a matter of cleanliness.

No evidence worthy of the name was ever produced to support statements like that, any more than any was ever produced to support their corollary, that there was an innately superior type of person—a fair haired, blue eyed so-called Aryan—who was destined to rule the world. (Only one or two of the top Nazi leaders bore the faintest resemblance to their own idea of racial perfection.) But the gas chambers did not need evidence and rational thought to feed them; they lived on the evil fruits of barbarous prejudices.

In the same way, there is no proper evidence to support the racial theory which is now most prevalent—colour prejudice. Not so long ago, people in this country thought that violent colour discrimination was confined to places like South Africa and the United States, and could not happen here. The influx of coloured immigrants over the past twelve years or so, working its own type of aggravation on the problems of housing, employment and so on, has shown how false was this comfortable notion.

This is not to say that Smethwick is the same as, or indeed anything like, Selma. Nowhere in this country is there a tradition of militancy to compare with that of the American South. People in, for example, Alabama and Mississippi assert their prejudices in defiance of the law, yet they escape the law's reprisals, which is something yet to happen in Great Britain. The conspiracy in the South is to all intents and purposes complete; it often includes the very people who are supposed to enforce the law. It includes the sheriffs and their deputies and the legal officers of the states.

In a letter to *The Guardian* of April 14th, 1960, a Judge Jones of Burke County, Georgia, revealed his thinking on the colour question:

Freely admitting that the number of our Negro voters is relatively small, we believe that this is due to the ignorance and indifference of the Negroes themselves rather than to any present policy of disfranchisement.

Judge Jones described himself as "a friend sympathetic to the Negroes": it would be interesting to know whether he now thought the obstacles put in the way of the Negroes who tried to register to vote in Selma amount to a "policy of disfranchisement" or not.

In any case, it is this sort of stonewalling which helps to keep the Negroes deprived of their vote, their chance of employment on equal terms with the whites, the legal right to eat, or ride a bus, alongside a white person. And in the end, if the Negro refuses to accept an inferior social status, it sometimes deprives

him of his life.

It is as well to say a word here about the laws, such as the Civil Rights Bill, which the Southerners defy. Many people think that these laws were inspired by humane motives. In fact, they were passed because American capitalism needs them. One of capitalism's achievements was to make labour power free to move from one place of employment to another, as the prospects of profit require. But the archaic prejudices which are responsible for the Confederate flag being still flown above the Capital in Montgomery, Alabama want to enslave, and therefore restrict the freedom of, the labour power which is in coloured bodies.

Capitalism's interests demand that it should not be concerned about skin colour; it wants to exploit all its workers at maximum intensity. At the same time, capitalism hates waste which depletes its profits—and having things like transport systems, hospitals and living areas divided into white and coloured is mightily wasteful. The Civil Rights laws are designed to eliminate, or at least to lessen, all of this and to open up further fields of exploitation for American capitalism.

When the Southern racists defy United States law, then, they are ignoring the needs of the very social system they so ardently support. But capitalism is a ruthless system; it will not be denied by a crackpot minority who cling to the nostalgias of the Civil War and to the divisive theories of the Confederacy. It seems certain that the Klansmen will be forced into a sullen acceptance of integration. The Negroes will have the vote, and the other rights for which they are now demonstrating. But will they also develop their own delusions and prejudices, and at election times support, with the votes so dearly won, the system which exploits and degrades them? If they do, somebody is sure to call this progress.

Before that happens there is a long, hard road of brutality to be travelled. The Southern rebels are representing ideas sprung from the roots of an earlier social system, and such attitudes do not die easily. They will not quickly abandon their prejudices, especially as long as they can assert them in violence. (There is a chilling echo of Himmler's words in this extract from Ku-Klux-Klan literature which was circulating in Mississippi last Summer: "Race mixing is more criminal than murder.")

The demonstrations, also, will continue; the Civil Rights workers have shown that they are not easily broken. These workers are doubtless confused, not to say ignorant, on many issues; they are certainly not Socialists; the end of their campaign will at best deliver the Negro from one type of suppression into another. It is easy enough to write this, in comfortable London. But it does not obscure the impressive courage of many of the Civil Rights workers—of the three young men who were murdered in Philadelphia, Miss., nor of those who were killed in the Selma marches, nor of the many others who have suffered in the Negro cause.

Compared to these people, the white racists are a poor lot. The novels of James Baldwin make the point that those who erect racial prejudices are themselves lowered by it. The many people who endured the concentration camps, and kept their dignity, were infinitely more mature and complete human beings than the insane brutes who tormented them.

The one hope in this is to be found in examining the reasons for racial prejudices. Capitalism rests upon the ignorance and the apathy of its people. It requires only a few to be sensitive and learned; the mass are expected and encouraged to absorb only as much knowledge as will fit them into their place in the routine of exploitation. Capitalism promotes a ruthless competitive urge, and all manner of conceits. It instils nationalism

into the working class, and it sets its own example by living out its disputes in violence. Periodically, capitalism glorifies brutality—it makes heroes of military murderers, it ennobles the men who organise the mass killings of wartime.

In this situation, one type of ignorance begets another—even one like racial prejudice, which capitalism generally finds a nuisance. But popular ignorance has its own momentum. The most recent example of this is the way in which the Labour Party has been forced to pander to electoral realities by imposing even stricter immigration controls than the Conservatives did. (It was, after all, Labour voters who changed their votes in Smethwick, on the issue of immigration control.) This has been done despite the bitter attacks which the Labour Party made on the original controls, and despite the fact that Mr. Wilson is still strongly condemning racial discrimination:

... we have a duty at home to show our deep loathing and to condemn by our words, and to outlaw by our deeds, racial intolerance, colour prejudice, anti-Semitism ...

Those words were spoken at last November's Lord Mayor's banquet. Perhaps everybody there was too full of over-ripe pheasant to reflect that Mr. Wilson, like the other political leaders of capitalism, is after the votes of workers who are politically ignorant, and who are therefore easy prey to any rabble-rousing race maniac. Mr. Wilson wants the support of people who, although they react against problems like bad

housing, unemployment, inadequate hospitals, have not the first idea of how to abolish them—and who cannot hope for enlightenment from Mr. Wilson's party. They are, therefore, liable to blame such problems onto anything or anybody. At the moment, many British workers are inclined to blame the influx of foreign, and especially coloured, immigrants. This, in its way, is no more foolish than the Labour Government blaming the financial crises of British capitalism onto foreign financiers.

The roots of racial intolerance are now stirring in this country, and it is disturbing to reflect that they may yet blossom into the same sort of malignant growth as disfigured pre-war Germany, and which went on to transform the greater part of Europe into a paradise for sadistic thugs. Racial theories divide the working class and set them against each other. They deny the unity of workers' interests, which overrides all barriers of nation, skin colour, language, and which joins all workers everywhere in the need for Socialism.

In some ways, the human race now resembles a blind, wounded beast, picking its way over a wilderness of smouldering ignorance. But human beings have eyes to see, and they are whole. There is massive hope in those who hang on and work for enlightenment, for the day when man ceases to wander like a tormented beast and starts to live like a man.

IVAN.

Background to Civil Rights in America

A GREAT many—if not most—people make a practice of judging shop merchandise by the display in the window. A policy such as this often leads to confusion, if not error. Much the same might be said for many of those who would analyze the civil rights struggle in America. They concentrate upon the propaganda and personal utterances of spokesmen involved in the struggle and gain an image of the causes, thereby, that is inaccurate to some extent and generally confusing. Slogans such as "Equality", "Justice", "Freedom", etc. are important in generating enthusiasm among the rank and file membership; they constitute the window display. But if one is to understand the problem it is necessary to get behind the slogans and examine American capitalism and its basic needs. Since the Supreme Court of the United States is a top agency of American capitalism, no better research can be recommended than an examination of their edicts over the years.

The Dred Scott Decision.

Every American school child has been made acquainted with the basic details — if not the underlying significance — of the Dred Scott decision of 1857. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney's court declared, 5 to 3, that Scott could not be a citizen because he was a Negro and that he was not freed from his original slave status merely because he had twice established residence on soil that was guaranteed free by the Missouri Compromise of 1820.

Whatever the attitude today towards the "morality", "justice" and "mercy" of the Supreme Court of 1857, one can be certain that it reflected the prevailing opinions of their

time. But more important, they reflected the needs of American capitalism. Southern plantation capitalism was still an important—even if a rapidly deteriorating—part of the United States economy and plantation capitalism operated on a foundation of chattel-slave labour. Chief Justice Taney and his Court were not about to endanger the sanctity of private property nor is it likely that many, aside from an Abolitionist minority, regarded the justices as black-hearted scoundrels.

Even in the North, feeling against the institution of chattel-slavery in the Southern states was not widespread and the Abolitionists were not by any means popular. But they carried on their activities. In Boston, for example, they soap-boxed on the Charles St. mall of Boston Common and they placed posters in Negro neighbourhoods warning the coloured people against conversing with white strangers lest they divulge information that could lead to the capture of runaway slaves. It took the secession of the Southern states from the Union to bring on the Civil War and to end the legal system of chattel-slavery.

"Separate But Equal"

By 1896 American capitalism generally, and Southern capitalism in particular, had new problems. In the North, industry had grown rapidly under the command of the "male-factors of great wealth"—Morgan, Carnegie, Rockefeller, etc.—There was area enough, what with the developing frontier, and wage-labour enough with the deluge of poverty-stricken immigrants, to obviate the need for expansion into the deep South. So the South remained largely a region of small scale, low wage, capitalism. Southern white capitalists had found it

advantageous to foster a myth of white superiority and a policy of white supremacy. By keeping Negro labour power generally well below minimum subsistence standards, white labour power was stabilized at a level high enough to satisfy a type of ego that is happy to be "better off" than others, even if considerably below national averages.

The Supreme Court, while not necessarily Southern in sympathy, could reflect the attitudes of American capitalism, generally, and still deliver a verdict on Negro rights consistent with the demands of Southern capitalism of the time. So in 1896 the Supreme Court decided that the State of Louisiana was not in violation of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution when it introduced segregation of Negroes in railway passenger cars. Again in 1908 the "nine old men" decreed that it was entirely constitutional for the State of Maryland to set up segregation in schools. So legalized segregation ("separate but equal") became perfectly natural, normal, moral, and the height of justice in the South and everybody, including such revered Negro leaders as Booker T. Washington, seemed happy at the new development in American democracy...

"... With all Deliberate Speed."

until 1954, when an entirely new set of circumstances—developed over a period of years and accelerated since the end of World War II—became reflected in a new and opposite Supreme Court decision. In fact, the decision on desegregation in 1954 placed a legal stamp upon a movement that erupted in the wake of a rapidly developing industrialization of the Southland. It is one thing to compel Negroes to take a back seat and refrain from "contaminating" the white man's schools and his pools when the region is pretty much a sleepy backwater. It is quite another problem, however, to segregate the coloured population—particularly the small section with higher educational qualifications and incomes on a par or higher than the vaunted "American standard". As big Northern industry moved into the South and as the South became a part of the 20th. century the pressure for "equal rights" under the Constitution reached boiling point and in many instances the lid was

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blown off in demonstrations, sit-ins, and riots in major cities both South and North.

Not only had it become evident that the "separate" Negro facilities, schools, etc. were far from equal, indeed decidedly inferior; it had also become evident to the Supreme Court that the very concept of separateness denotes inferiority and constitutes a violation of the 14th. Amendment, Melville W. Fuller and his Supreme Court of 1896 and 1908 notwithstanding.

But why had the Negro movement reached its present dimensions as late as the mid years of the 20th. century? Why not in 1900, or in 1920, or 1940? There are those who might infer that Chief Justice Earl Warren's Supreme Court is composed of men of higher moral calibre than the courts of Roger Taney and Melville Fuller. Or perhaps, even, that the moral qualities of the nation are higher today than in 1857 or 1908. Even if we accept that this is true, the question remains; why this should be so at this particular time. All evidence points in one direction. Segregation, except in special instances, is not in the interests of American capitalism today on either the domestic scene or, especially, the international arena. The rapid appearance since World War II of a number of new nations populated and ruled by coloured people has doubtless influenced the conversion of an ardent segregationist such as Lyndon B. Johnson into an outspoken champion of Negro civil rights. And only the more backward states of the Old Confederacy refused to go along with him in November, 1964. For Mr Johnson today represents the interests of the total national capitalist class of America and segregation has now become a positive menace to those interests.

Civil Rights and Emancipation.

Despite the continuing opposition to the Civil Rights Law enacted by Congress in 1964, in parts of the South there seems to be a general compliance. It is but a matter of time until only the most dominant of all discriminations — between workers and capitalists—will remain.

There is no denying the heroism displayed by rank and file Negro and white workers — even children — against fearsome odds. From the "sympathetic" liberals who would have them not ask too much too quickly, from the bigoted and dangerous Birch Society members, Ku Klux Klansmen, and even from Southern "law and order", those who struggle for civil rights find a great many cards stacked against them. But the civil rights groups, themselves, are in a sense reactionary. They organize — for the most part — on the basis of loyalty to America and they demand for Negro workers nothing more than the opportunity to compete equally in the sale of labour-power. They cater to the myth of racialism even to the extent of building an image of a glorious history in Africa. They encourage and foster religious practice among their following. In short, they balance their militancy with the sheeplike propaganda so important to capitalism, and they hide the greater struggle, in which workers of all colours are brothers.

HARMO (Boston, Mass.).

"America's 15,000,000 negroes are its single most under developed human resource, and they cannot reach their full potential usefulness until they are thoroughly integrated with the white population. . . . Only when negro and white families can live together as neighbours, when negro children and white children can play together, study together, go to the same church — only then will the negro grow up properly prepared for his place in the world of work."

The Manchester Guardian, (15.5.56).

Black nationalism in Africa

NATIONALISM as a political theory originated in Germany around the beginning of the 19th century, when the German nationalists put forward the theory that those who speak the same language form a natural community which ought to govern itself.

This was to develop into racialism and to give rise to talk of the "Anglo-Saxon race" and the "German race".

Despite the fact that nationalism has no scientific basis for its claims, it has been a powerful force in the world. Of course, it was not something which suddenly appeared out of the blue; its roots are to be found in the beginnings of capitalist development in Britain and France and the effect this had on intellectual life in Germany. This put Germany in a peculiar historical position.

Germans who had absorbed ideas developed in Britain and France turned to nationalism—the unity of all German speaking people—as part of the drive to modernise their country. Similar nationalist movements and theories appeared in Poland, Italy and Hungary, though only in Italy was the movement to have success in the nineteenth century. Here the achievement of national unity and independence was the equivalent of France's revolution of 1789; it created the political conditions in which the evolution of capitalist society could continue.

In short in many of those countries which underwent capitalist development after Britain and France, the overthrow of the old order was represented as a form of national revolution—in some cases as a move for national unity, in others for national independence and in others for national regeneration. To refer to nationalism as a weapon of the social revolution from feudal society to capitalism is not to say that the nationalist movements were composed of traders and small factory owners. In fact the relationship is not as simple as this.

Capitalism created the social conditions for the spread of nationalism by alienating sections of the population from the old order. It is among this section—students, past and present, modern army officers and wage workers — that nationalists were to be found. These set about agitating among those they considered their fellow nationals in order to awaken their national consciousness.

From Europe, nationalism spread out during the twentieth century to the Middle East and Asia. Today it is spreading through Africa—Macmillan's wind of change. The outward form of this nationalism varies from country to country depending on historical circumstances, but its essential remains the same; it is an instrument of the capitalist social revolution in relatively backward countries.

In Europe the nationalist theories were based on language. In Africa they are based on colour and "race". For this reason African nationalism is sometimes referred to as "racist". This use is permissible in so far as African nationalism does claim to champion the interests of the black people or "race". Perhaps a better term would be Black Nationalism; this however should not obscure the fact that there are groups working among Africans which do preach race hatred and race domination. These can be called Black Racist groups.

The intellectual roots of African nationalism go back to the Negro nationalist movements which appeared in America and the West Indies in the first part of this century. These ranged from openly black racist organisations such as that of Marcus Garvey — the forerunner of the present day Black Muslims in America and the Rastafarians in Jamaica — to the cultural nationalism, so-called negritude, of the poet Aime Cezaine.

From this developed the doctrine of Pan-Africanism, which proclaimed the unity of interest of all Africans and those of African descent. Educated Africans and African students abroad joined in this movement. On returning to Africa, the students set about agitating for national independence. They would have had no success had not social conditions been ripe for the spread of their ideas.

As in Europe and Asia, nationalism in Africa spread only to the degree that the old order was breaking up. The colonial powers, in training Africans as soldiers and priests and civil servants, in employing them in the mines and on the plantations, undermined their own position. For these detribalised Africans formed the social base of the anti-colonialist struggle. Since the war the further break-up of the old order has proceeded apace. So has nationalism. It is only nine years since the first black African state, Ghana, became independent from colonial rule. Now, with the important exceptions of parts of central and southern Africa, most of black Africa has achieved independence.

The regimes that have taken over from the colonial governments have been various. Some have consisted of a motley collection of tribal leaders and opportunist and corrupt politicians. Others have an iron handed industrialising clique. Ghana provides the model of this last type; there the administrative techniques of Russia have been combined with the doctrine of Pan-Africanism to get what Nkrumah calls "African socialism".

Other nations which are modelled on Ghana — Guinea, Kenya, Tanzania — are one party states in which a vanguard party is used to mobilise the population for carrying through the capitalist social revolution. Because of the role of the state —and the influence of Russia—it was perhaps inevitable that these regimes would label themselves socialist. In fact they are totalitarian state capitalist regimes in which an elite uses the state power to try to extend capitalism rapidly throughout the area under their political control.

The situation in central and southern Africa is complicated by the presence of a not inconsiderable minority of persons of European descent. These—the whites—once enjoyed certain political and economic privileges at the expense of the Africans. It is in these circumstances that ugly black-white clashes have occurred and will almost certainly occur again. Among both white people and black there are groups preaching race hatred and intolerance. Many of the white workers are under the impression that they can preserve their security through discriminatory legislation. The African workers, on the other hand, see the solution to their miseries in African nationalism. The murders of Mau Mau in Kenya, and those of the Congo rebels, are examples of nationalism in action, just as the terrorist tactics employed by European nationalists in the past were. In Africa, however, they are now complicated as a clash between black and white.

African nationalism and the one party regimes it tends to set up are respectively the theory and practice of the capitalist social revolution in Africa. The spread of African nationalism, together with the attempt by the whites to maintain their privileges, is almost certain to lead to further inter-racial violence and terror. Nationalism, with its talk of equality, may not at first sight appear as repugnant as racialism pure and simple. It often however, has the same results: bloodshed in which members of the working class are killed—not for their own interests but for those of their masters present and future.

A.L.B.

Labour Party and immigration

HIGH-FLOWN phrases about "the brotherhood of man" fall thickly from the lips of the Capitalist politician, and perhaps some of them are sincere, at least some of the time. Fenner Brockway, until last October the Labour M.P. for Eton & Slough, tried and failed no less than seven times to interest the Commons in a bill to outlaw racial discrimination. "When a child is born", he said with a note of Christian piety on December 13th, 1961, "it is not its physical form or the pigment of its skin which makes it sacred—it is the spiritual life, the personality within".

The precise meaning of those words is a matter for discussion, but what is undeniable is the anxiety of Mr. Brockway and other M.P.'s over the growing signs of racial friction in Britain. However, it is one thing to condemn racialism, but quite another to deal with it effectively in a world of private property, where antagonisms and prejudices of all sorts are fostered. In any case, whatever Mr. Brockway's opinions may have been, he was a Labourite and cannot escape responsibility for his party's actions over the question of racialism and immigration control.

Indeed, despite fierce Labour opposition to the Commonwealth Immigration Bill in 1962 (and we shall come to that later), it may not be generally remembered that it was two Labour members, H. Hynd (Accrington) and M. Lipton (Brixton) who over four years before (on April 3rd, 1958) had said in the Common that "... the time has come for reconsideration of the arrangement whereby British subjects from other parts of the Commonwealth are allowed to enter this country without restriction". At that time, it was the Tory spokesman, Miss P. Hornsby-Smith, who resisted their motion and reminded the freedom lovers of the Labour benches of the part coloured workers had played in taking jobs rejected by whites:

Anyone who uses public transport in our big cities, will know that they have filled a very great gap in staff and ... have done a very good job.

But as she also had to admit, the heavy demand for labour was easing, and coloured workers were finding it more difficult to find employment than before. Here we can detect one of the economic pressures which made the question politically explosive in the early sixties, and perhaps cost the Labour Party three constituencies in 1964-5.

It was convenient for the Macmillan government that so many people seemed to forget that housing and employment problems existed long before coloured immigrants set foot here in any numbers. The Tories saw the issue as a political god-

send, among other things an opportunity to deflect criticism of their own failures to solve these problems onto the innocent shoulders of the coloured minority. And despite their assurances to the contrary, the subsequent Immigration Bill was far from colour-blind in its provisions. The Tories were in fact pandering to the worst prejudices of public opinion and, by using a minority as a scapegoat, were taking crafty advantage of racist sentiment without incurring the stigma usually attached to it.

Here it was that the Labour opposition under Gaitskell committed a first class tactical blunder in assuming that it was still enough to label a party racist to condemn it in the eyes of the public. Conditions in British politics were changing, but Gaitskell showed little awareness of this when commenting on the Queen's speech on October 31st, 1961:

... whatever hon. Members opposite may say, whatever the Home Secretary may say ... this will be regarded very largely throughout the world as the imposition of a colour bar over here. ... To impose restrictions is a very grave step indeed, and one that I personally hope the Government will not, when they come to it, actually take.

This bitter and unqualified attack was resumed the following day by George Brown. He threw the words of the Tory Cyril Osborne into the Government's face ("This is a white man's country and I want it to remain so"), and ended by saying:

The proposal to take these powers is not really to solve the difficulties and the real consequences of the proposal is to give themselves an alibi for what they are refusing to do, whether for brown, black or white. ... The casual way in which this is dealt with is a gross reflection on H.M. Ministers, and if the house were easily to accept it, it would be on the house.

It is old news now, that the government's measure was passed in the teeth of fierce labour opposition, something which was to cost Gordon-Walker his seat at Smethwick three years later. By then, however, Labour policy under Wilson's leadership had undergone a right-about-face on the issue. Forgotten were Gaitskell's words ("immigration from the Commonwealth has been of economic benefit to us.") for the new leader was wily enough to see that the old stand was a positive vote loser.

So the 1964 Labour manifesto talked of retaining the very measure of which they had been so scornful, and indeed since their return to power, Labour have actually tightened control at all points of entry. Of course, they are at one with their Tory sparring partners in denying any racial bias, but in the light of this, the words of their home secretary, Sir Frank

"RACE" MIXING

Those who deliver themselves of unfavorable judgments concerning "race crossing" are merely expressing their prejudices. ... The truth seems to be that far from being deleterious to the resulting off-spring and the generations following them, interbreeding between different ethnic groups is from the biological and every other standpoint highly advantageous to mankind. ... Indeed, if there were any truth in the suggestion that hybridization results in degeneration or decadence man should have died out long ago or else sunk to the level of a deformed idiot, for he is one of the most highly hybridized creatures on earth.

From "Man's Most Dangerous Myth" (Ashley Montagu).

"RACE" AND "BLOOD"

Scientists have for many years attempted to discover whether or not any differences exist in the blood of different peoples, but the results of such investigations have always been the same—no difference has been discovered, except in the statistical distribution of the traits which all human beings possess in common. In short, it cannot be too emphatically or too often repeated that in every respect the blood of all human groups is the same, varying only in the frequency with which certain of its chemical components are encountered in different populations. This similarity cuts across all lines of caste, class, group, nation, and ethnic group.

From "Man's Most Dangerous Myth" (Ashley Montagu).

Soskice, have a strange ring. In a Commons debate on March 23rd, he resisted any extension to the law because:

I should have to ask you to give these powers to be used against Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders, against all members of the old Commonwealth countries as well as the new. They would have to be operated against visitors and students, from all these countries with complete impartiality.

True, the Labour government have since introduced a bill outlawing racial discrimination in certain spheres, but this is as much a question of public order as anything else. Statesmen can learn from the mistakes of their counterparts elsewhere and British capitalism cannot afford another Selma or Little Rock in Smethwick or Brixton.

However, even if immigration restrictions achieve their purpose, there are almost a million coloured workers in Britain and they are here to stay. They will have children and their numbers will swell. They will suffer the same problems as their

white brothers, but with the added indignity of resentment and prejudice which no law enactment can cure. The coloured vote will also increase and this is something which no Labour or Tory politician will be able to ignore when trying to keep the situation in check.

They have all pandered to ignorance and bigotry in the furtherance of their vote catching—racially prejudiced workers are always impressed by government restrictive measures against minorities—but the boot may not always be on the same foot. The present set-up could conceivably produce an offspring in the shape of mounting coloured resentment against white workers in the future; already some ugly signs of this are appearing elsewhere in the world. But whatever happens, it should be interesting to watch Labour and Tory antics as the drama is played out, and should prove as instructive a lesson in political tightrope walking as we have ever seen.

E.T.C.

The origin of apartheid

IN spite of world wide condemnation of the policies of the South African Government, the Nationalist Party, particularly since the end of the last world war, have gone from strength to strength, crowning success with their own bigoted brand of success. This consolidation of the political power of the Afrikaaner pays a perverted tribute to his fanaticism. The Afrikaaner has at last won the Boer War. The tribal complexity of the Afrikaaner, his aggressive unity, his hatred of the *Uitlander*, must be seen against the economic history of the Boers in South Africa.

From the very first days of landing on the shores of Africa in 1652, the mainly Dutch settlers were an oppressed colonial minority. After having established a strictly Calvinist peasant community at the Cape, they were forbidden by the Dutch Government to allow its use to any ship of a nationality other than Dutch, a restriction that brought them economic hardship. Also, the Dutch Government enforced enactments and imposed taxes that rarely took local conditions into account. With the weakening of the Dutch Government in 1795, the colonists took over the Cape and proclaimed their right to own slaves.

This autonomy was short lived, for in 1806 the colony was seized by the British.

During the first years of the 19th century, the Bantu tribesmen began infiltrating into South Africa, and clashes took place between the Boers and the Bantu which led to the first Kaffir War of 1834 in which many Boers were massacred. Also, during this first year, the British Government forbade the Boers to own the slaves, most of whom they had taken from Asia.

In an effort to once more regain their autonomy, between the years 1834 and 1840 the Boers trekked north and established the Republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State. But still they had to carry on the wars with the Bantu, and now at the same time they had to fight the British who had declared their occupation of the interior "illegal". Eventually, the British came to the view that the cost of coercive forces was too high in relation to the return, and in 1852-53, they granted sovereignty to the Transvaal and Orange Free State.

The British Government immediately regretted their decision, for in 1853 gold and diamonds were discovered in the

Special outdoor meetings dealing with the Race Question

HYDE PARK

Sunday, June 13th and 20th, 3 pm

NOTTINGHAM

SLAB SQUARE, Sunday, June 6th, 6 pm

BIRMINGHAM

BULL RING, Sunday, June 13th, 6 pm

BRISTOL

DURDHAM DOWNS, Sunday, June 20th, 3 pm

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 pm
East Street, Walworth,
June 6th and 20th (11 am)
June 13th (noon)
June 27th (1 pm)

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Wednesdays

Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers St.) 8 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm

OXFORD OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sunday, 3 pm

St. Giles

June 6th and 20th

WELWYN

Community Centre
Mill Green Rd., Welwyn Gdn. City
Thursday, 17th June, 8 pm
TITLE TO BE ANNOUNCED
Speaker: R. Critchfield

see page 89

Boer Republics as well as great quantities of other minerals including coal, copper, manganese, chromite and asbestos. The friction between the British and the Boers was again renewed and culminated in the outbreak of the Boer War in which the Boers were "temporarily" defeated.

This is the legacy of violence that history has bequeathed to the modern political situation in South Africa, a tri-partite enmity between Boer, Bantu and British. Its framework was that of economic rivalry and material struggle, the southward expansion of the Bantu, the attempts of the Boers to maintain a mainly peasant community, the arrogant imperialism of British commerce. The social cohesion of the Boers, expressed in terms of religion, language, and so-called race, became their mode of survival. This was the basis of Afrikaaner nationalism.

But Afrikaaner nationalism is no longer supported by a peasant economy struggling for survival. The Boers themselves are now integrated into capitalist farming, and distribute their products through both national and world markets. Increasingly, this capitalist form of agriculture uses mechanised techniques as well as the technology of a large canning industry. As well as this, Afrikaaners are increasingly involved in industrial capitalism. The further South Africa's economy develops, the more does Afrikaaner nationalism and apartheid become removed from the economic and historical background in which it was nurtured. Nevertheless, this body of prejudice is established as an ideological force in itself, impinging on the policies of the South African Government, even at a time when it can be shown—especially from the point of view of industry—that it is hindering development.

Apartheid or "separate development", is a bogus and hypocritical political contrivance. It caters for the emotional-

ism of nationalist nostalgia and is an electoral plank which corners the fears of most white workers. Most of the legislation brought in by the Nationalist Government in the name of "apartheid" is outrightly repressive and in defence of farming interests.

The battle that African workers wage in South Africa is beset by the most intimidating difficulties imaginable. They have no long-standing tradition of organisation. They suffer the "legal" hooliganism of police brutality, even to the extent of being shot down. There is a plentiful supply of cheap labour, making industrial pressure almost impossible. Even those who are employed live so near the borderline of starvation that strike action invokes the greatest hardship. The layout and siting of African townships is arranged to facilitate swift police or military reprisal. The machine gun or even air attack can be easily used without interference to the "white" population. Saracen armoured cars are frequently used to break up assemblies of African workers.

Ironically, the electoral support that maintains nationalist political power is what can only be regarded by tradition as an unholy alliance between voters of both Afrikaaner and British origin. It is political support that arises from the irrational fears of three and a quarter million Europeans in a country which also includes nearly fourteen million Bantu, Asiatics and Coloureds. Just as they were in the past, economic struggles in South Africa continue to be confused by and expressed in terms of "race" and "culture".

The tortured situation in South Africa is a direct product of its tortured past, but men should learn from their history, not continue to be burdened by it.

P.L.

MICHAEL LA TOUCHE

Our Comrade Michael La Touche died suddenly on April 21st at the early age of 43 years.

For the last few years of his life he lived in Trinidad and Jamaica, where he was a Medical Officer.

He joined Bloomsbury Branch in 1944 and about one year later was speaking on the platform. He also wrote a number of articles for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, mostly dealing with Public Health. He was particularly qualified to do this; he was a medical journalist as well as a doctor. Prior to his death he was studying the field of social medicine in the West Indies and it had been his intention to contribute a number of articles on the subject to the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

I well remember the winter evening when Michael first appeared at Bloomsbury Branch. In a public school accent he announced his intention of joining the Party. He also added that he had recently been invalided out of the Royal Navy, in which he had been an officer. An ex-naval officer with a public school education did not seem at first sight to have the best background for a revolutionary Socialist, but La Touche proved to be a real asset.

Suffering from a chest complaint, he took up a post in Trinidad where the climate was

kinder and his health temporarily improved. With the advent of independence he moved to Jamaica in December 1964, where he died at Kingston Hospital.

A number of comrades will always remember Michael La Touche for his highly developed sense of humour and his gay

REFORMERS, NOT SOCIALISTS

To the working-class student who has begun to free himself from the the mental bondage of capitalist teaching, the admissions of some of the agents of the master class often come as a surprise. This surprise sometimes has the effect of obscuring his view of the relative value of the other statements, made by these agents, and so leading to unsound or even false conclusions.

This is seen in the attitude adopted by the rank and file of the Labour Party, Clarion organisations, the so-called independent labour party, etc., when some capitalist supporter happens to admit the existence of evils that stand out clear enough for any child to see. These supporters are at once hailed as "advanced", or even as "Socialists", when not the faintest real ground can be found for such a claim. The worker who has

approach to life. He was a gentle person, dogged continually by indifferent health. He had great courage and he refused to be subdued by his many illnesses. His optimism about the future of the Party and of the Socialist movement was unbounded.

J.D.

a firm grip of the essentials of Socialism, however, sees the matter from another standpoint. He knows that the development of capitalism forces forward certain changes (accompanied by new evils) that call for some regulation on the part of the masters. These admissions are, to him, evidences of the changes, signs of the development; but in no way do they mislead him into fancying the makers of these admissions are Socialists. He always applies the touchstone of Socialism to their views and actions on fundamental matters, and usually finds that these persons are the more acute and up-to-date of the capitalists' agents, and that their work is the more misleading on that account.

From a review of "Elementary Principles of Economics" by Ely & Wickers, SOCIALIST STANDARD, June 1915.

NEWS IN REVIEW

HOUSING

Progressing backwards

The Labour government's housing drive is progressing steadily backwards.

At the beginning of May, several big building firms announced that they were cutting back their production of houses.

Wates Ltd. (whose advertisements tell us that they *care*) said they were reducing by about fifteen per cent. McManus started a cut in its labour force of around twenty per cent. Richard Costain stopped work on two hundred or so part-finished houses—a quarter of their yearly production.

These reductions do not mean, of course, that everyone is now so comfortably housed that there isn't any need to build any more homes for the moment, thank you.

On all sides, the tragic evidence of the housing shortage abounds. The Milner Holland Report, which touched only one aspect of the problem, said that over seventy thousand London dwellings have no proper bath and that more than one million share a bath, a sink and other basic amenities. There are still thousands of homeless people in London alone.

Why, then, are there cuts in building?

As part of their great programme of bringing prosperity to the working class, the Labour government has imposed a credit squeeze which, among other things, has made it more difficult to raise loans to buy houses.

These loans—a mortgage from a building society, a housing endowment policy—are the only method open to a worker who wants to buy a house he will never have the ready cash.

These, then, are the people who are affected by this aspect of the squeeze. In Glasgow, reported *The Observer*, tenement flats are being left unsold because young couples cannot raise the loans to buy them. For the same reason, cheaper houses in Leeds and Bradford are not selling. Bigger, costlier houses are not in the same difficulties; in Leeds and Bradford, those in the £8,000 to £15,000 range can be sold easily. People who can afford that sort of house can also raise the necessary loan—if indeed they need to borrow the money at all.

This particular crisis will probably continue, and develop. "We will only start up again," said Costain's managing

director, "When the purchaser shows he can raise the money." In other words, they will only start building again when they think they can sell the houses.

Housing, like all human needs under capitalism, is a commodity—something which is made to be sold. If for any reason the market contracts, as it is contracting now under the credit squeeze, the houses will not be built.

Simple, but bad luck on anyone who has not got anywhere to live. Perhaps the government's intelligence on the matter was represented by Mr. Robert Mellish, who is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Housing. "Personally," he said, "I feel that building societies are a machine by which people buy homes..."

This brilliant flash of insight, leaving unilluminated as it does the fact that building societies are also machines by which a few people make a lot of money, does not reveal anything new to those workers, who, unable to afford a house any other way, have chained themselves to a lifetime's debt to a building society.

Any year now, as Mr. Mellish settles into his new job, he may catch up with one or two other facts which are common knowledge. He may even go further, and realise that there is a perpetual housing problem for the working class, and that no government can solve it because the problem is an inseparable part of the capitalist social system which they administer.

CONFLICT

Pakistan-India

One thing is clear about the Rann of Kutch, and that is that the fighting there was not over who should have the right to enjoy the beauties of its scenery.

This is one of the world's inhospitable spots—a ten-mile square patch of lifeless mud and salt flats, broken by small mounds and peopled only by the Jeroba rat. The 24th. Parallel runs through the middle of it.

But inhospitable or not, the Rann had all the makings of a typical international dispute. To begin with, there may be oil out there somewhere. The Sun Oil Company of the U.S.A. plans to start drilling offshore fairly soon.

This is not to say that the fighting was about oil only. Its origins, as far as they

can be discerned, were rather more complex.

India forcibly established its troops in the Rann, north of the 24th. Parallel, in 1956—soon after oil had been struck in the Gulf of Cambay, about two hundred miles away to the south.

At that time, Pakistan was on the Western side in the Cold War, and was signatory to several American dominated pacts. India, on the other hand, except where its own interests were concerned, was the Great Uncommitted, infuriating Washington by its insistence on playing off the Western bloc against the Russian and acting as honest broker whenever it could.

Whatever else this did, it gained for India a certain diplomatic leadership in South East Asia. Since then, the situation has changed.

Pakistan has recently taken the initiative right out of India's hands. President Ayub has been feted in both Peking and Moscow. The Chinese government has stated its support for Pakistan in the Rann dispute. The Russians have implied that they uphold Pakistan's case over Kashmir.

India, with no sympathy in Washington to fall back upon, was thus isolated—something which was emphasised by President Johnson's brusque cancellation of Mr. Shastri's proposed visit to him.

In this situation of double-cross all round, the Indian government had to do something to try to regain the lost ground and to divert its people's attention away from India's defeats.

On these facts, it seems likely that it was India who provoked the fighting in the Rann. Delhi's propaganda machine was soon at work to make the most of it.

The so-called Socialist Party demanded assurances that the fighting (in which, of course, none of its leaders were actually engaged) should not cease until the Pakistani forces had withdrawn. Mr. Shastri himself said:

I know that each of our 450 million people of India is today prepared to make any sacrifice in defence of the motherland...

The Rann of Kutch, then, had all the requirements of a classical war situation—rival economic interests, diplomatic ploys, political manoeuvres, betrayal and hysteria.

The final irony is that India and Pakistan have always posed as leaders of the "Uncommitted" nations, as the peace-loving neutrals of the Cold War.

The Rann of Kutch repeated the lessons of Kashmir and Goa. The newer nations of capitalism are no better than the old. The peacekeepers of yesterday are the warmakers of today.

DOMINICA

Old, old story

In yet another flare-up in the endless round of minor conflicts, the focus of world attention swung last month to the Western Hemisphere.

Once again the United States Marines landed in that trouble spot of the centuries; the island of Hispaniola. This time it was the Eastern half of the Dominican Republic; not very long ago the marines were hovering off the coast of Haiti.

President Johnson's statement that All we are in the Dominican Republic for is to preserve freedom and to save those people from conquest.

was rich, even from such a poker-faced operator as the President. As any brief glance at the blood-stained history of Dominica will show, the people there have never had any freedom to lose.

In fact, for most of the time they have been ruled by corrupt and vicious dictatorships with occasional periods of civil war. And if the occupation of a State by the armed forces of a foreign power is not conquest, then the word has changed its meaning.

However, almost in the same breath the Americans came out with the real reason—fear of another Cuba. Dominica was in fact Viet-Nam in reverse. The United States has always been extremely touchy about Non-American states having a foot in the American Continent.

The Monroe doctrine of 1823 was proclaimed to prevent this, and the conditions of the modern world, with its nuclear weapons and its long range missiles, makes the idea of a possible Russian base so near home particularly unattractive.

Whether or not there were actually any so called Communists in Dominica, is unimportant the possibility was enough. Russia and China made all the expected noises, and the usual moves in the United Nations, but obviously did not intend to risk a major war over a possible minor gain.

There was however a further complication for the U.S.A. — namely the Latin American States, with their fears and suspicions of their gigantic neighbour. In the 19th Century the United States could afford to treat South and Central America with contempt, but today they prefer to have amicable relations with them.

They have, over the last 30 years,

devoted much energy to their "good neighbour" policies and to the Organisation of American States (O.A.S.)

If the situation really demands it, and American Capitalism is threatened, Washington is quite prepared to go ahead and damn the consequences. Dominica, luckily, was not that serious, which saved all that good neighbourliness from going up in nuclear dust.

STATE STEEL

Dead duck

The nationalisation of the steel industry may well be the last quack and flutter of a dying, if not already dead, duck.

Nationalisation is not the political issue that it once was. The Labour Party have quietly forgotten their intention, avowed only a few years ago, to take over cement and sugar. They have also forgotten, although less quietly, the fact that Clause Four commits them to nationalise all industry.

The Conservatives are similarly placed. They have left the vast majority of Labour's post war nationalisation untouched. They have even added some of their own state influence—and in the steel industry at that. They set up the Iron and Steel Board, with instructions to "exercise a general supervision over the iron and steel industry..."

Steel is probably the last opportunity, for a long time to come, for the sham battles over state control. For both parties, it is something of a political albatross which neither of them can cut away.

One argument has been notably absent from the debate over steel. When the Labour Party wanted to nationalise the mines they always pleaded that this would benefit the miners. They drew pictures of the suffering of the mining areas under private control. "Pithead baths" was a promise on the lips of every Labour candidate.

This had a certain force, especially in the mining communities which nursed dreadful memories of their past. But the same argument could not be applied to the other concerns which the Attlee government nationalised. No Labour propagandist, be he ever so eloquent, could pretend that the clerks in the Bank of England had gone home hungry and filthy before the war. Neither could the argument apply to the airlines, to gas and electricity — and now it cannot be used about the steel industry.

The case for taking over steel rests on other grounds. The White Paper made them clear:

The iron and steel industry occupies a focal and dominating position in the British economy. . . . A single new large integrated works may cost £150 million. . . . There are difficulties in raising private funds for projects of this sort.

In other words, steel is vital to the economy of British capitalism and only a state controlled, integrated industry can hold out any hope of providing the capital to allow it to live up to its importance.

On this issue the Labour Party's mind is made up, at least until they change it. Some of their Members revolted over the scale of compensation, but they were rather late in the day here, because the Labour Party have never concealed their intention of arranging "full and fair" compensation to the steel shareholders. The time for revolts on this issue was last October, when these very same rebels were campaigning to get into Parliament on Labour's programme, compensation and all.

It is true that the terms are what can be called "fair", if by that we mean that the stockholders are not going to lose out on the deal. Government stock to the value of £550 million will be exchanged for securities valued on the market, on the day the White Paper came out, at only £430 million. Any disagreement between the Minister and the stockholders over compensation will be referred to arbitration. What could be "fuller" and "fairer" than that?

If the Tories denounced the compensation as a fiddle, this was only a haggle, an attempt to bump up the price of steel shares. The Stock Exchange provided a more reliable reaction: "The voice of protest," said *The Guardian*, "was muted..."

A couple of days later, the point was rubbed in when millions were added to the values of steel shares. Whatever the reason for this, one thing it does not suggest, and that is that the capitalist class are trembling behind their Walls of Jericho at the sound of Fred Lee's steel band (state controlled, of course).

CORRECTION

In the April issue of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, in the article The "Welfare" State, we said that the first Factory Act was passed in 1812. This was incorrect; the first piece of factory legislation was the *Morals and Health Act* of 1802. We apologise for any confusion caused by our mistake.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

The Passing Show

The ignorant will blame anyone or anything for a problem, without any worthwhile evidence. He will blame the weather for his corns and the moon for his madness, and the "blacks" for just about every social evil afflicting us today. The "blacks" have taken the place of the Jews, Irish and Welsh as a focus of the bigot's vehemence and hatred when he tries to account for problems which one government after another has failed to solve. At sometime or another in the past few years I have heard coloured workers blamed for: unemployment, bad housing, low wages, sexual depravity and very recently for the worsening traffic problem. Yes, one workmate even chucked that one into the pot for good measure.

The other scapegoat minorities of former days must be sighing with relief that for a change it is not their backs that are being beaten, but if the racist ever gets through with hating coloured workers, we may be sure that some other minority will be in for it. The fascist-minded worker — let us not mince our words — clings to these spurious ideas

from a twofold purpose. First of all, he can dismiss any social evil with a wave of his mental hand, by blaming the selected scapegoat. To blame is easy; it avoids the tedious job of hard thinking. Then again, spleen and anger are handy ways of working off the frustration which life under capitalism causes him, but which he has no idea how to tackle. To rant, snarl and blame are his stock-in-trade, to scratch under the surface and try to explain — never.

But how many outwardly calm and reasonable people fall for this sort of stuff? A good many I should say, if Smethwick is anything to go by, although perhaps they would shy off supporting an avowedly fascist party. The man who blamed darkies for the traffic congestion was one such as this. A very even-tempered, quietly spoken, even reticent chap, likeable in a dull and uninteresting way, but harbouring the same sort of misconception about capitalism's problems as any fanatical hot-gospeller of race hatred.

It is anyway the same basic attitude — see a problem — think up a theory — and then

try and make the facts fit it. Such is the stuff on which fanaticism and bigotry thrive. All capitalist politicians use this method to some extent at some time or another. The tragedy is that it goes down so well with the average audience.

Gaspers

"Give generously... He did" — Churchill Memorial Fund Slogan.

"The Minister for Economic Affairs drove home his point — that Labour wanted to create a Britain for which non-Socialists could be persuaded to vote" (*Guardian* report 3.5.65).

"I will never so long as I am Minister of Defence be a party to putting British soldiers, sailors and airmen into action without the tools of their job." (Dennis Healey, 2.5.65.)

"An incomes policy is part of the price we ought to be willing to pay to ensure that men and women are kept at work." (James Callaghan — Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2.5.65.)

E.T.C.

Letter: WORKERS' CONTROL

In the article "Workers' Control", in the January 1965 *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, you appear to me to use the term "society" rather as an abstraction. After some not unfamiliar arguments, you conclude, rather arrogantly, by asserting that the workers in industry would be incapable of running affairs. It is so "incredibly complicated" that only "society" can do the job.

But in what does society consist but men and women, mostly the workers in industry, as asserted by the people you are criticising? And who runs "society" today but the "higher" echelons of the working class?

If they are considered incapable of assuming responsibility, who will do so?

John Adamson, Blackheath, S.E.3.

REPLY

We have never said that the working class, in industry or elsewhere, are incapable of running affairs. In fact one of the central points in the Socialist case is that, under capitalism, the working class run the world from top to bottom — only they do it not in their own interests but in the interests of the class who own the means of wealth production and distribution.

Socialism is the expropriation of this owning class and the transfer of the means of wealth production to society as a whole. In other words men and women (no longer a working class since classes will have disappeared) will run affairs in their own interests; they will produce to satisfy their needs.

Nor does the Socialist Party regard society as an abstraction. Society is made up of men and women organised in a particular way. Today, production is social; the means of wealth production are complicated in the sense that they consist of a world-wide network of mines, factories, railways and the like.

The article "Workers' Control" said, among other things, that since production is social, and not a collection of self-sufficient units, then the administration of the means of production must also be social. We did not suggest — and we do not think — that the reason for this is that the people who operate a particular part of this social productive apparatus are incompetent. It was merely a

plea to those who accept the confused idea of "workers' control" to face the facts of social life.

After all, a mine or a factory is not self-sufficient. Finally, we should mention that the whole idea of "workers' control" is coloured by the conditions of capitalism, in that it suggests that the centre of peoples' lives under Socialism will be the place where they happen to work under capitalism.

It ignores the fact that under Socialism men and women will no longer have to be tied to a particular job and a particular place of work, but will be able to use their various abilities in many different ways. This is what "from each according to his abilities" means.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

All quiet in Glasgow continued from page 87

jobs they find are usually those which do not, at present, attract local men anyway.

When the necessary conditions have arisen, in isolated instances Glaswegians have shown the same lack of class consciousness as workers elsewhere. Only recently, when some immigrants moved into a once posh street in the City, their neighbours raised the usual howl about the adverse effect this would have on the value of their property. Last Autumn a racial strike occurred at the Gavinsburn Bus Dept, just outside Glasgow, when the strikers claimed too many Pakistanis were getting jobs in an area of high unemployment. Nor should we forget how earlier immigrants — Italian Cafe owners —

had their shops smashed up by patriotic mobs when Italy entered the war in 1940.

The coming of the Immigration Act, plus the existing state of industry, makes any immediate influx of immigrants unlikely. It does not follow, however, that the present peacefulness must continue. Capitalism has shown that no great change is required in its socio-economic climate to produce, here, the outbreaks of intolerance so common in other parts of the country.

V.V. (Glasgow)

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THE DANGERS OF RACE PREJUDICE

The root cause of modern race-prejudice is the capitalist system of Society, a society of competition and struggle; struggle between capitalist and worker; struggle between capitalist and capitalist; struggle between worker and worker. For the working-class, who constitute the overwhelming majority of its population, it is a society of poverty and insecurity; to most of them it offers not the slightest chance of escape from a lifetime of constant, heart-breaking effort to earn a living. For the working-class, it is a society which breeds war and strife, in which their masters, on whose behalf they fight, use every device to stimulate antagonism and hatred between them.

From the cradle to the grave, they are subjected to a mass of propaganda which deadens their minds, works on their prejudices, and endeavours by every means possible to turn their thoughts away from the real cause of their troubles. They are the tools of political leaders and demagogues who make them promises which they do not keep. Disappointed, they exchange one set of political leaders for another, whose promises are no more fulfilled than the promises of those before them. They become disillusioned, bitter, and cynical; fair game for dictators and "strong men" who promise to lead them to a "promised land", but instead lead them into greater disasters and misfortunes.

All the time they are experiencing unemployment, poverty, insecurity, competition for jobs, struggles to "rise up the ladder". They seek to escape from the harsh world of reality in dreams and games of make-believe, in football pools and cinemas, but only for brief moments, for capitalism soon brings them back to things as they are, and not as they would wish them to be. They still have to contend with poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and war. For the working-class, Capitalism is a society of mental, social, and economic frustration; as such it breeds race-prejudice as a swamp breeds pestilence.

To the extent that Socialist ideas permeate the minds of the working-class, wherever they may be, to the extent that workers realise that their interests are in common, irrespective of race, and opposed to the interests of the capitalist class, irrespective of their race, to that extent will they become proof against race-prejudice and will work together for the establishment of Socialism which will end, once and for all, the problem of race-prejudice.

In the words of our Declaration of Principles: "...the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex".

From SPGB pamphlet "The Racial Problem — A Socialist Analysis" (1947).

Socialist Standard

Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY Thursdays 8 pm (1st and 15th July) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address. No meetings in August.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 2nd July at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath (Tel. BEX 1950) and 16th July at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottinham SE9 (Tel. KIP 1796) Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 7.30 pm, 16a Berkelev Street, Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 37 Beltane Street, Glasgow, C3.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Pertherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KENSINGTON Fridays 8 pm, The Ladbroke Hotel, Ladbroke Crescent, Ladbroke Grove, W11. Correspondence: R. Cain, 35 Waltham Road, Southall, Middlesex.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room D), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Cufford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Neslon, above address.

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson, Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

KIDDERMINSTER Enquiries: J. Anios, 31 Sion Hill, Broadwaters.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

MID HERTS Meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at The Red Lion, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel: Hatfield 4802.

NOTTINGHAM will next meet on Sunday, 4th July, at 2.30 pm in the Committee Room, Co-operative Hall, Heathcoat Street, Nottingham. Enquiries: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive, Cerrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesday 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Thursdays (8th and 22nd July) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (July 5th and 19th) 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowd, Llangyfelach, Swansea.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (8th and 22nd July) in month, 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warneke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (9th and 23rd July) in month, 7.30 pm Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Meets last Friday in month, at 7.30 pm, The International Centre, George Street. Enquiries: A. Atkinson, 4 St. Martins Road, Ashton on Mersey, Sale, Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

REDHILL Enquiries: A. A. Kemp, 19 Ashcombe Road, Merstham, Redhill, Surrey.

SUNDERLAND Details of meetings from P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

9 months of Labour rule

TWENTY years ago this month, Great Britain elected the first majority Labour government in its history.

July 1945 was a time of jubilation for the Labour Party; but it was also a time of reckoning. Their two previous administrations—in 1924 and 1931—had been minority governments, and had been able to blame their failures onto their dependence on Liberal support in the House of Commons.

The Atlee government had no such excuse. They had a massive majority behind them and they were determined to carry out the programme they had cherished for so long. Many Labour M.P.s said—and perhaps some of them even believed—that the day of Socialism had dawned.

Reality was cruelly different, and it exposed Labour Party theories for what they were. The 1945 government were committed to running British capitalism, and they did this in basically the same way as the Tories would have done.

They fought the working class over wages. They used every weapon they could to break strikes in the docks and the coalfields. They launched the nuclear rearmament programme (which, says the Labour Party now, is based on a discredited nostalgia for outdated imperialism).

Some Labour ministers of those days became famous as political buffoons and failures. Others wore themselves into their graves. British capitalism stood undisturbed. And in the end the electors showed what they thought of Labour's attempts to run the system, by turning them out of office.

By 1964 the memories of Labour government had grown dim enough for the workers to want to give it another try. The Labour Party cannot now excuse their failures of 1945/51, so they have simply ignored them. The Conservatives were at any rate ready in the last election to stand by their record in office, and offer it as an incentive to put them back in power. Labour's record is so bad that they kept a shameful silence, and quietly forgot the Atlee government and their disasters.

Now once again we have a Labour government, and once again they are in the toils. British capitalism is providing them with many problems—financial, economic, international. They are disputing with the working class over wages. Many of their policies—on the Bomb, immigration, taxation—have been reversed.

And once again, like their predecessors in 1945, they are failing to solve the problems of capitalism. As this becomes more and more apparent, Labour Party support is declining, in spite of all their gimmicks and vote catching publicity.

Of course, the Labour government are looking for excuses. Mr. Ray Gunter, Minister of Labour, for example, thinks that all the troubles are due to a deficiency in our morals:

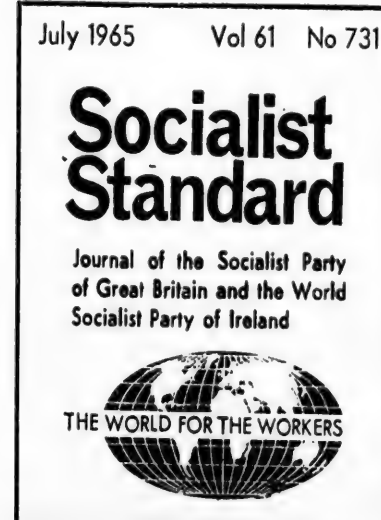
It is only when the nation realises and understands that there are underlying moral standards to which we should be obedient, that the Labour movement is going to achieve everything it wants to achieve . . . (Speech to the Co-operative Congress, Edinburgh, 1/6/65.)

Mr. Gunter is the man who said, on election night last October, that the Conservatives should be thoroughly ashamed of their victory in Smethwick. He is also the man reported (*The Guardian* 31/5/65) to be pressing now for "drastic measures" to further restrict the intake of immigrants into this country.

This is representative of the complete reverse of Labour policy on immigration. It would be interesting to know what Mr. Gunter thinks about the morals of a party which alters its line so cynically.

But however the Labour Party may twist and turn, its fate is sealed. Whether its policies are changed or not, whether they are applied or discarded, capitalism will continue. And with capitalism will also go its inescapable problems.

The only way to remove those problems is to abolish capitalism and replace it with Socialism. And that will happen only when the working class throughout the world have seen through the distortions and the failures of all the capitalist parties and have consciously and unitedly opted for Socialism.



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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN
The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4, at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

LABOUR ADMINISTERS CAPITALISM

Problems for Labour Governments

THE enthusiasm of Labour Party supporters for their government is not what it used to be. They voted for Wilson's government last October—just sufficient of them to give it a bare majority—and no doubt they are convinced that it is more deserving of support than the Conservatives, but there is not the fine careless rapture with which Labour voters heralded earlier Labour victories. In politics it is often better to travel hopefully than to arrive, and certainly the end of each Labour government has been in an atmosphere of disappointment among even its most loyal friends.

The "Government of Brains."

It would probably surprise many of those who voted Labour at the last election to be told that it is now over forty years since the first Labour Government took office, in the winters of 1923, and that the present Labour Government is the fourth—the fifth if Attlee's second government, after the election of February 1950 is treated as a separate administration.

Although the first Labour Government claimed to be "the Government of brains" its year of uneasy office made little difference to the way things had been going before it came in. It was not the largest party in the House of Commons: the Tories had 258 M.P.'s, the Liberals 158 and the Labour Party 191. But the Liberals wouldn't support a continuation of Tory government so it fell to the Labour Party to become a government dependent on Liberal votes.

The main issue of the election had been the Tory government's proposal to introduce a wide range of duties on imports. This was opposed by the Liberals and by the Labour Party, both of which at that time were devotees of free trade. In view of the fact that the Labour Party is now as much committed to protective tariffs as the Tories (and signalled its entry into office by the 15 per cent import levy) it is interesting to read in the Labour Party's 1923 election manifesto that "tariffs are not a remedy for unemployment. They are an impediment to the free exchange of goods and services upon which civilised society rests. They foster a spirit of profiteering, materialism and selfishness, poison the life of nations, lead to corruption in politics, promote trusts and monopolies and impoverish the people".

True to his Party's pledge the 1923 Labour Chancellor, of the Exchequer, Snowden, reduced taxation on food by £24 million a year to keep down prices, though when they went out of office the retail price index was slightly higher than when they went in. Unemployment had fallen a little, from 1,340,000 to 1,247,000 and wages had risen by five or six per cent.

One of the promises of the Election Manifest was that, if elected, Labour would at once introduce a "capital levy" on everyone owning £5,000 or more and use it to pay off the National Debt and reduce taxation. For various reasons, including their lack of a Parliamentary majority, the Labour Party dropped the scheme and never revived it again, though it had been presented as an indispensable measure. If they had enacted the levy it would have been of no interest to

workers: all that it would have achieved would have been, as one of its supporters admitted, "a transfer of wealth among wealthy persons". It would have deprived property owners of some property but at the same time reduced their tax burden.

When, after a year, the Labour government were defeated in a "vote of confidence" and resigned, it was not over some action to show that they desired "the suppression of the capitalist system" as they had declared in Parliament only a few months before taking office, but over the withdrawn prosecution for sedition of a member of the Communist Party.

Some sections of the Labour Party drew the conclusion from their disappointing first experience of government that they should not again take office without a majority in Parliament. A resolution to this effect was moved by the late Ernest Bevin at the 1925 Labour Party conference but was overwhelmingly defeated.

The Government of Disaster 1929-1931.

When the Labour Government came back in May 1929 they were full of optimism. They were now the largest party, with 287 M.P.'s against Tory 260 and Liberal 59. They had seen the continued decline of the once powerful Liberal Party and the failure of Lloyd George to stage a Liberal come-back in spite of his pledge that within 12 months the Liberals would reduce unemployment to "normal levels". Unemployment had for several years been above the million level and the new government, under J. R. MacDonald (who also had led the first government in 1923-24), gave priority to dealing with it. They gave J. H. Thomas, the railway union leader, the ministerial responsibility, helped by a committee of three, one of whom was Oswald Mosley. MacDonald (like Attlee and Wilson in later governments) collected round him an Economic Advisory Council, consisting of economists, industrialists and others to advise him on economic problems; but, as Henry Pelling remarks, "unfortunately, the experts could not agree and Snowden preferred to follow the recommendations of his Treasury officials". (*Short History of the Labour Party.*)

It was later confessed by Thomas that he had been advised by an "expert" that unemployment had at last reached its peak and was about to decline; and he had believed this. Unfortunately for Thomas, the government were not at the bottom of the depression but at the edge of another trade decline, the biggest for half a century. The unemployment figures started rising almost immediately the Labour Government took office. At the time of the election in May 1929 unemployment was 1,165,000; a year later 1,759,000 and two years later 2,702,000. What was happening was a long term decline of some big British industries, coal, cotton, shipping among them—and a world-wide decline of trade, with record unemployment in America and Europe alike.

Many people have said in the years since the second world war how happy they would be if only prices would not go on rising. The years of the second Labour Government were years of falling prices—but few were happy about it and wages were falling too.

Government revenue was not growing as fast as Government expenditure—a situation which was pushing them towards reductions in the pay of civil servants, teachers, police, etc., and towards cuts in unemployment pay. At the

same time exports were declining heavily month by month and producing the symptoms of the "adverse balance of payments"—too few exports to pay for imports and the consequent selling of British Pounds by foreign holders for fear of devaluation.

The tension split the Government and the Labour Party. Prime Minister MacDonald, along with Snowden, Thomas and some others formed a National Government with Tories and some Liberals while the rest of the Labour Party went into opposition. Ironically it was the National Government, formed "to save the Pound" which proceeded to go off the gold standard.

Attlee's Turn in 1945.

For the first time in its history the Labour Party at the election in July 1945 obtained a clear Parliamentary majority of 146 over all other parties, 393 in a House of 640, the Tories having 213 and the Liberals 12. There was nothing now in the political balance of parties to prevent Labour carrying out the Nationalisation and other measures named in their Election Manifesto.

Governments sometimes flagrantly break their election pledges and fail even to try to do what they said they would do. It was the fate of the Labour Party's first majority government that, having carried out a lot of its specific pledges, nobody liked the results very much, not even the Labour supporters who had shouted for them. This was true for example of Nationalisation—the railwaymen and miners soon found that it was only a different name on the industry, and any misguided gratitude the electors may have felt for the new Health Service and National Insurance Scheme did not last very long.

On a superficial view the Government's financial position was a happy one. Had they not ended the war and cut armament expenditure to half, and could they not devote the money to social reforms? In fact what they faced was industry running at a production level well below that of pre-war; the need to get aid from America; difficulties in getting foreign produced raw materials owing to war-time destruction; and the problem of the desperate shortage of housing, made far worse than usual by the war.

Capitalism has many faces at different times. In 1929-31 the Labour Government's biggest worries were mounting unemployment, falling prices and falling exports. In 1945-1951 they were equally worried by scarcities of labour, scarcity of materials, inability to take advantage of overseas "seller's markets", and by rising prices. They had promised stable prices and had to explain why prices steadily rose and why wage rates were lagging behind them.

History was to have an ironical revenge on them about the maintenance of the Pound. In 1931 the Attlee group in the Labour Party, which did not follow MacDonald into his coalition with the Tories and Liberals, had scoffed at the gold standard and argued that it was something better got rid of: they were only too pleased to see MacDonald's government unable to save the Pound. But in 1949 the position was reversed: now it was the Labour Party led by Attlee which, after repeatedly pledging "no devaluation", and declaring that devaluation would cause prices to rise, suddenly devalued by thirty per cent. (The present Labour Government under Wilson is promising not to go in for another devaluation.)

Rising prices had quite a lot to do with the eventual defeat

of Attlee's government in the 1951 election, after they had staggered along between 1950 and 1951 on a very narrow majority. The outbreak of the Korean war in 1950 drew the Labour Government into a massive programme of rearmament at the same time as the war had sent prices of many raw materials rocketing. The rise of 10 per cent in retail prices in 1951 was the sharpest for years and must have influenced many voters "to give the Tories a chance".

What has experience of governing, spread over forty years taught the Labour Party? It has possibly made them more knowledgeable in handling capitalism's financial and economic problems, though their Tory opponents profess to doubt it; otherwise all it appears to have done is to induce them to drop even the pretence of replacing capitalism by Socialism about which they used to declaim before they first took on the job of administering British capitalism.

H.

Labour versus the Trade Unions

THERE have been several attempts by the employing class to use its political power to pass laws or make judgments designed to render effective Trade Union action illegal. Such laws and judgments have stimulated in the Unions the idea that a political party of their own creation can be used to repeal the laws or amend the injustices.

This idea prompted the British Trade Unions to sire the British Labour Party and, ever since, to accept responsibility for its progress and to pander to its requirements. Like doting parents the Unions subdue their own interests whenever they appear to conflict with the needs of their offspring, even though the offspring has reached adulthood.

Not all Trade Unionists subscribe to the idea of harnessing the Unions to the Labour Party. The majority have little interest in official policies. They regard their Union as a body apart from themselves to which they contribute a weekly subscription and expect to get a service in return. They will commonly use such a phrase as, "What is the Union doing about it?", as though the Union is some entity over which they have no control but which should be looking after their interests. Union officials heighten this impression by speaking of giving the members a service, as an insurance company might speak of its clients.

It is an active minority in the Trade Unions that keeps the Union's sails trimmed to the Labour Party's winds. It is these active Trade Unionists who, in the main, are keen Labour Party supporters, many of them holding office in local Labour Parties or the national body. It is they who sit at conferences and committees and voice the Labour Party's interests.

For years the reports of Trade Union conferences and of the Trades Union Congress have bristled with speeches and appeals to Trade Union members, urging them to do nothing that might jeopardise the progress and prospects of the Labour Party, particularly when a parliamentary election has been in the offing. Even the expression of unfavourable opinions has been frowned upon as, for instance, a statement by Mr. W. J. P. Webber of the Transport and Salaried Staffs' Association at the 1960 Trades Union Congress:

AGAINST THE UNIONS

Such opinions inside and outside this country, shared by friends and enemies alike, can spell disaster and tragedy for the Labour Movement.

At the Transport and General Workers' Union biennial conference during the same year, delegates ardently appealed to the conference not to adopt certain policies, even though they themselves favoured them, because those policies were contrary to the Labour Party policy and might cause a rift in the Labour Party ranks.

In the early years of this century it was the Taff Vale judgment which rallied the Trade Unions to the Labour Party. In 1924 it was the desire to repeal the Emergency Powers Act; in 1929 to repeal the Trade Disputes Act of 1927; in 1945 it was again the Trade Disputes Act which was still on the statute book, plus government order 1305; in 1964 it was partly the impatience at the Tory government's efforts to put a brake on wage increases.

When, in 1945, with a swamping majority, and again in 1964 with a slim one, the Labour Party was elected to government, the active Trade Unionists rubbed their hands with delight and the inactive ones breathed hopefully. The lessons from previous Labour Governments had not been learned.

Following the 1945 election the Labour Government repealed the 1927 Trade Disputes Act but the only noticeable difference was the increased flow of finance into the Labour Party coffers through the removal of the political levy "Contracting in" clause of the act. Mr. G. D. H. Cole in his *History of the Labour Party Since 1914* quoted the rise in Trade Union membership of the Labour Party from 2,635,346 in 1946 to 4,031,434 in 1947. Order 1305 was abolished—but the substituting of order 1375 passed without notice on the part of the majority of Trade Unionists.

The Labour Party fought the 1945 General Election on a programme entitled, *Let Us Face The Future*, in which they appealed to the Trade Unions with the promise, among others;

... a high and constant purchasing power can be maintained through good wages ... money and savings lose their value if prices rise, so rents and the price of the necessities of life will be controlled.

In 1948 the Labour Government published, *The Short Economic Survey*, which had a very George Brown sound about it. The proposals for better living standards for all were summed up on page 15 with the following:

1. Working harder and more skilfully.
2. Arranging our work so that the same effort produces more goods.

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3. Giving up old ways that use too many people on a job. Together with, of course an urge to spend less, save more and please, please, moderate those wage demands, because the danger lies, "... not in producing too much but producing too little—and too dear." (Government poster, 1948.)

Despite these policies and appeals, 1,333 industrial disputes were reported to the Minister of Labour during 1950 alone, most of them "Unofficial" and the majority in the nationalised industries. From 1945 till the Labour Party left government office in 1951, the workers fought a continuous battle, trying to keep their wages climbing as fast as the rising living costs.

Labour politicians, who had been loud in their denunciation of their Tory predecessors' use of troops during strikes, did exactly the same thing a number of times while they were the government and even went so far as to prosecute workers for striking.

Comparing the present Labour Government's policy on wages with that of their 1945 counterpart reveals that the only difference is that they are exactly alike. Today's First Secretary of State, Mr. George Brown, has obtained the support of many Trade Unions for his Productivity, Prices and Incomes Policy. On December 16th last he got a "Joint Statement of Intent" from representatives of Trade Unions and managements on behalf of their members. It reads:

... to encourage and lead a sustained attack on the obstacles to efficiency, whether on the part of the management or of the workers, and to strive for the adoption of more rigorous standards of performance at all levels.

With this goes the proposal for a three per cent "norm" in annual wage increases. It is hard to detect a difference between this and the previous Tory government's effort to keep wage rises at an annual three per cent level. To Tom, Dick and Mary in the rank and file of the Trade Unions it is all the same.

Workers still have to struggle to keep their wages in pace with rising costs. The recent increases to Passenger Transport workers, for example, were argued for on the basis of the movement of the Cost of Living Index and the general rise in prices since June 1964.

"Unofficial" strikers are no respecters of political parties. Strikes are the direct result of the discontent bred of capitalism and when a Labour Party undertakes to administer capitalism it will still have to deal with them.

The strike is the workers' ultimate weapon and, if Trade Union officialdom lines up with the Labour Government, it is unlikely that the weapon will be used officially. It is more possible that Union officials will try to assume powers to discipline members who strike without their authority.

Any hopeful assumption that Messrs. Wilson, Cousins and company will achieve better results for the workers than did Messrs. Attlee, Bevan and company, is doomed to disappointment. Good intentions, sincerity, better public images or astute statesmanship cannot make Capitalism function to benefit the workers. Whilst the workers continue to accept Capitalism their ability to maintain their living standards at a desired level will often depend on their industrial strength and its tactical use. Political support to a Labour Party which has no notion of abolishing Capitalism, but hopes to make it run smoothly, will lead eventually to disillusionment and conflict between that party and the workers.

W. WATERS.

FROM ATTLEE TO WILSON

Labour's righteous leaders

WHEN they came in in 1945 the Labour Government, believing themselves to be righteous, were bold as lions. "We are the masters now!" roared the new Attorney General Sir Hartley Shawcross. Their ecstasy was described by the late Lord Dalton in his memoirs:

There was exhilaration among us. Joy and hope, determination and confidence. We felt exalted, dedicated, walking on air, walking with destiny.

Six years, and innumerable crises, later it was a very different story. Of the leaders who walked on air that July day in 1945, Bevin was dead and Cripps was dying. Attlee and Morrison had suffered grave illnesses. The future of the Labour Party was to be one of intrigue and dissent; of Attlee delaying his resignation until Morrison was too old to succeed him; of Bevan listening for the cue which was never called; of Gaitskell taking his chance, and leading the party to an unprecedented defeat.

In 1945 the leaders of the Labour Party had already rendered good service to British capitalism, in Churchill's wartime coalition. It was here that many of their reputations were made, and none more so than Ernest Bevin's. When Churchill called upon him, Bevin had already become famous as a blunt trade union leader, a skilful negotiator and a scourge of Labour Party rebels. Probably nobody had the confidence of the trade unions like Bevin. Churchill made him Minister of Labour, obviously hoping that his experience would be enough to stop most industrial trouble before it started. Like one of his successors as Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union—Frank Cousins—Bevin was given a safe seat in Parliament so that he could join the government.

Attlee surprised a number of people by naming Bevin as his Foreign Secretary. But Bevin soon established himself as one of the Labour government's few popular successes—so zealous and determined was his championing of British capitalism's interests in the diplomatic battles—largely against the Russians—after the war. Few people now remember him for his failures. He once said that he would stake his reputation on solving the problem of Palestine. He was quite unable to prevent Russian expansion into Europe. And we all know what happened to what he described as the most important objective of his foreign policy: "... to be able to go down to Victoria Station and take a ticket to where the hell I like without a passport."

The failures of Ernest Bevin were not coincidences. That rough tongued, hard headed son of the masses had no more idea of how to control capitalism than the pampered aristocrats who are traditionally supposed to be born diplomats. Bevin once claimed that a Labour victory was essential after the war because it would be vital to have a government which could understand the Russians. The Tories, he said, were not equipped for this; Left must talk to Left. The Russians, who probably even then had a good idea of what the post war situation was going to be like, must have had a good laugh—or at least a grim smile—at these words.

Bevin was no more prescient in economic affairs. In November 1947 he wrote to Dalton that he "... intuitively

felt that we were beginning to get through ..." *Intuitively!* This was before the convertibility crisis, the dollar gap emergency, potato rationing, devaluation ... problems which were obviously overlooked by the Foreign Secretary's intuition.

The other Labour leaders were no better. Morrison, for example, did not try to solve the problems of British capitalism by intuition. In his view, the whole thing was caused by Hugh Dalton—by "... faulty administration at the Treasury for which Dalton must be responsible ... he had little flair for administration and there was evidence that he was unaware of the financial crisis of 1947 until he was in the midst of it." Morrison does not explain why the crisis continued long after Dalton had left the Treasury. The situation was, in fact, at its worst when Stafford Cripps was Chancellor—and it was Morrison who, in the Thirties, had invited Cripps to join the Labour Party.

Just as Morrison criticised Dalton, other Labour leaders were critical of Morrison. Bevin was constantly feuding with him. Attlee later said "Perhaps (Morrison) was unwise to take the Foreign Secretaryship because he was not quite so well qualified." (Some readers may need to be reminded here that it was Attlee who, as Prime Minister, gave the Foreign Secretaryship to Morrison rather than Morrison who took the job.)

Such back biting was typical of the Attlee government. Some of it reached an incredibly low level, for grown men who were supposed to be upholding the dignity of capitalism's established institutions. Hugh Dalton, holder of the ancient and respected offices of Chancellor of the Exchequer and later Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, took exception to the self-important manner of Sir Hartley Shawcross, holder of the ancient and revered offices of Attorney General and later President of the Board of Trade, and consequently dubbed Shawcross "Sir Peacock".

Dalton (who as a child was described by Queen Victoria as a horrid boy with a loud voice) started off in 1945 full of bounce but was soon deflated. His Budgets, he claimed, were popular in the City:

The Stock Exchange boomed—and went on booming for days. (First Budget.)

In the City the Stock Exchange rejoiced. (Second Budget.)

He did not explain how somebody who claimed to be a Socialist could make the City rejoice; he was too busy, at the traditional Lord Mayor's Banquet, making the traditional promises to the capitalist class;

I shall aim to make my forthcoming Budget ... fit into a series ... a consistent and developing financial plan, which shall assist our industry and trade ... (3/10/45).

It was not long before the Labour government abandoned all intention of producing any plans which were "consistent and developing". They were soon rushing out emergency Budgets, imposing restrictions, desperately juggling with capitalism's financial mechanisms. But however many fingers they plugged into the holes, the dyke crumbled about them and the cold waters washed them away.

After Dalton's enforced resignation, Attlee had to look around for a successor. Sir Stafford Cripps had once said that the Treasury was not his line of country, so of course he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. This was the last act in the moving story of the reform of Cripps the firebrand, the man who had been expelled from the Labour Party over

his advocacy of the Popular Front, who had advised the workers to refuse to make armaments, who had warned that a Labour government would have to deal with opposition from the Palace. (He was also the man who, shortly after this last speech, was heard by Morrison to murmur "The King, God bless him" when drinking the loyal toast.)

Perhaps some of Cripps' pre-war followers expected him to do something startling at the Treasury. If so, they were soon disappointed. Cripps continually exhorted the working class to tighten their belts, to forego wage increases, to work harder. He fought his hardest to build up the exports of the British capitalist class. He became associated with the whole concept of austerity; his grim face (even his smile was like a wintry wind) and his abstemious habits were one of the Conservatives' favourite propaganda weapons. Cripps was a deeply religious man and an unrelenting moralist, but this did not prevent him denying his intention to devalue the pound, when he knew that the plans for devaluation were all cut and dried. He worked mightily for British capitalism, and in the end he wore himself out.

All these men, and the lesser fry, were presided over by dry, shrewd, Clement Attlee. The Prime Minister was fond of sending the trouble makers in his party short, stinging letters which usually ended "Yours ever, Clem." In Cabinet, it was his habit to sit quietly doodling while the battle raged about his head, then dismiss the matter under discussion with a few words of summing up. This method had its uses; Morrison later complained that Attlee applied it in double crossing him over a compromise on steel nationalisation.

Attlee cultivated the art of the menacing understatement; "It's awkward to have to sack a man . . ." "It (the Berlin crisis of 1948) was quite a danger." His self-effacing manner was useful in the ruthless job of administering British capitalism—and in the end, apparently, it turned out to be a vote winner as well.

Harold Wilson was only a minor figure in the Attlee government, but he managed to chill a few spines:

Nye's little dog . . . he did not seem to have much warmth or strength of character. (Dalton).

Perhaps the most realistic classification for this able economist and clever debater is that he is a Wilsonite. (Morrison).

Attlee expressed surprise that Wilson should have resigned with Bevan in 1951; "He ought to have had more understanding of the economic position."

Perhaps none of them realised what Wilson signified for the Labour Party. When Wilson became leader, Labour had a long history to live down—a history based on its origins, and fashioned by its reckless propaganda when it was far, far from power. The Labour Party once used, albeit in a distorted version, the theories of Marx; they once adored Kier Hardie's cloth cap. "Somehow", wrote Morrison, "we have managed to give the impression that the (Labour) Party is anti-British and pro-every foreign country . . ."

If they were ever to rival the Conservatives as an established ever ready alternative government for British capitalism, the Labour Party had to exorcise its ghosts and cast out its devils. They could no longer afford the luxuries of idealists and theorists. They could not afford another young Cripps with his wild speeches, or a Strachey with his learned, troublesome books, or a Bevan with a perpetual mine shaft on his shoulder. The modern Labour Party had to aim first at getting power; its election programme had to fit both the needs of Britain's ruling class and the prejudices of the mass electorate, with no nonsense about a new social order of equality. This had to be a massive act of exorcism, and Wilson was ready with bell, book and candle.

We were able to see how Wilson had done his job, in the election last October. Certain things were obvious. Firstly, he had snuffed out all controversy in the Labour Party's ranks. Secondly, he had no intention of reminding the electorate of the record of the Attlee government, and offering it as an incentive to vote Labour again. Thirdly, he produced a programme with glamour, promise and a specious humanity, the cynicism of which sickened only the enlightened, whose votes were too few to worry about.

Wilson's was a high pressure, modern campaign. He did not miss a trick—seen on television shaving in an hotel room, he was using an electric razor. He fastened on to every one of his opponent's mistakes and made sure of his own publicity. It was summed up by Anthony Howard of the *New Statesman*:

. . . without anyone really noticing it (Wilson) has already transformed the Labour Party from being primarily an ideological movement into being an election-minded organisation (*Sunday Times* 6/9/64).

Presumably, this is supposed to be an achievement which we should all applaud. What seemed to be overlooked by the Labour Party was that if they won the election they would

REPORT FROM A LABOUR CONSTITUENCY

be faced with the same insoluble problems of capitalism which laid low their predecessors in 1945. Wilson has not been able to master-mind these problems out of existence. The record of his government so far has been one of scratching their way from one emergency to another, of cynically modifying their programme and what they once called their principles. Housing, immigration, nuclear weapons, taxation policy, are only a few of the issues on which the Labour Party now stands four square the opposite way to last October.

Although it is common for capitalist parties to break their promises, this does not save them from defeat. The Labour Party are already losing much of the support which put them in power nine months ago. The results of by elections, and of local elections, are going against them. At the time of writing, *The Economist* is convinced that the Labour government is going down.

This, if you like, is the achievement of Harold Wilson and his colleagues in the smart, modern Labour Party. Like the men of 1945 they came in bold as righteous lions but now, their best laid schemes aghast, they are more like frantic, hunted mice. Soon, perhaps, they will be sent scuttling away behind the mouldering wainscot.

IVAN.

Abertillery

ABERTILLERY is said to be the constituency with the largest percentage of Socialist voters in the country. If only it were! Certainly the Labour Party has dominated the area for over 30 years but that's a different matter altogether.

Labourism came to the mining valleys of Wales, in one of which is Abertillery, through the activities of the Independent Labour Party before the first world war. In South Wales, with over one hundred branches, the ILP was the leading light of the popular Social Reform movement which arose from the miseries and indignities the miners had to suffer. After a period of pre-war "Lib-Labism" all the mining constituencies fell to the Labour Party, which by 1922 had become the largest party in Wales.

The local councils too came under Labour control in this period. The Labour and ILP pioneers were at least sincere—although confused—men and women. Some had a very adequate knowledge of capitalist society and were well-versed in the theories of Marx. Today's Labour people are of a different calibre.

For over thirty years the Labour Party has controlled the local councils of the area; only in the last ten years have they been opposed at election time. Many Labour candidates are still returned unopposed. The fact that the South Wales coalfield is a one-party area has had its inevitable effects on the Labour Party. Today in this area it has ceased to be even a sincere, if confused, popular movement for Social Reform and has become an organization for running the local government machine—right from the selection of councillors to administering the Water Boards.

The old pioneers with their idealism have disappeared and a new generation has taken over. The new men—the councillors, the county councillors, the aldermen, the JP's—who include the Labour MP, Alderman Clifford Williams JP, still

speak the language of the pioneers. In the past by-election they have freely talked of Socialism and said they were Socialists. They have described their party as that of the people against the property-owners. They have declared that the forces of wealth are trying to smash the Labour Movement (if that's not pure rhetoric what is?). Financiers have been called mad dogs. It's the sort of language that would make the slick efficiency boys who are remodelling the Labour Party's image throw up their hands in despair. But they needn't worry; it goes down well. It's doubtful if these people really know what the words they uttered originally meant. In any case it is an open question who are more despicable: the arrogant councillors mouthing the phrases of the Labour pioneers or those who don't attempt to disguise the fact that they have capitulated to capitalism completely.

It is often said that the working class have a short memory. Certainly there are many grounds for such a conclusion but the working class of the mining valleys of Wales remember alright. They remember what the Labour candidate described as "the dark, desperate years" of 1920-1939 which were years of "misery, want and privation". During this period the mining communities did suffer—from the attacks on their living standards by the coal-owners and from the unemployment and destitution of the years of the great depression.

At one end of the valley, where the Abertillery constituency is, lies the mining village of Nantyglo which in English means "coal valley"; today there are some eight pits in the constituency. Indeed Abertillery may well be the constituency with the highest percentage of miners on the register in South Wales, perhaps even higher than in the more famous Rhondda valley further west. The proportion is not what it used to be and an increasing number of workers are employed in nearby steelworks and factories. Nevertheless the mining tradition is dominant.

Unfortunately, Abertillery's remembering of the past has taken the form of an unshakeable faith that the Labour Party is their Party and has their interests at heart. Nothing the Labour Party has done, or is doing, seems to shake this faith. Questioned over Vietnam, Alderman Williams said that as the Labour Party was "dedicated to peace" it must be right in what ever it was doing over the matter—and the audience cheered! On another occasion he declared that the Labour government had reduced the arms bill by £50m—and nobody questioned him.

The Conservative Party in an area such as this is in a hopeless position. The few thousand professional and tradespeople who make up its support are not organised to present a challenge to the Labour Party save at national elections—and then their election machine is manned mainly by outsiders. In between such elections the Conservative Party ceases to exist, though in recent years those who vote Conservative have been organising themselves into so-called "Independents' Associations" to contest local elections.

Nowadays the real political opposition to the Labour Party locally comes from *Plaid Cymru*, the nationalist party. Surprisingly, *Plaid Cymru* has been making headway in the mining valleys of Wales—they have councillors in Merthyr (which was Keir Hardie's seat) and in the Rhondda, once the home of Noah Abblet and the syndicalists who wrote *The Miners' Next Step*. This may be a sign that a political change is coming to these valleys after decades of one-party Labour domination.

The fourth political party operating in the area, the Com-

continued bottom next page

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Inflation and prices

Why do individual prices rise and fall and why, at certain times, is there an upward movement of prices, which is called inflation, or the opposite movement, a downward movement of prices, which is known as deflation? There is no need to stress the importance of the subject, but it may be useful to point out one or two of the difficulties that we come up against. There are, for example, people who think that capitalism would not be so bad if prices were not so high. They believe that prices are high simply because manufacturers and shopkeepers want them to be high and that the Government ought to tell them to stop it. On the other hand, there are people who think that prices are high because trade unions put up wages and that the Government ought to tell them to stop it too. The fact is that there are real economic causes of high prices that have not much to do with the wishes of the shopkeepers, trade unionists and others.

One particular reason for looking at the question of inflation is that in Great Britain and in a number of other countries, for the past 25 years, we have had prices rising more or less continuously; we cannot afford not to know why this happens. The subject is a somewhat difficult one; with three separate aspects. First, we have to consider what determines what we may call the normal price of each article that is sold, what Marx in some places called the natural price. Secondly we have to consider what causes deviations in the normal price of each article, and third, we have to consider what causes the broad general movements of prices up or down, affecting all prices equally and not merely the prices of particular articles. The next point that must be borne in mind is that you cannot study prices and inflation as something separate and distinct from other economic questions.

Before we can understand the movements of prices, we have to go back to the commodity's value. Almost all of the things which have a price have it because they are the products of human labour and the amount of human labour required in their production is the measure of their value. The things bought and sold are also useful or have a use value, but that is a different quality, not to be confused with value. Value is a social relationship of capitalism, a relationship between persons that expresses itself as a relationship

Aberlillery (continued from previous page)

munist Party, did not contest the by-election. The South Wales coalfield is one of the few areas where the so-called Communist Party has acquired a few seats on the local councils. However most of their councillors have been elected by Labour voters for multi-member wards. In the by-election campaign, an attempt was made to smear the Labour candidate by claiming that he was a Communist Party member or supporter in the 1930's.

Whoever started this rumour was obviously unaware of political conditions in the mining valleys of South Wales; even if it had been true it would have helped rather than hindered the Labour candidate. For the Communist Party, by being militant trade unionists in the NUM, have earned the respect of many miners—the nickname "commo" has exactly the opposite connotation to the American one "commie". What support the Communist party has won has not been so much on its "principles" as on its trade unionism. Thus it is more a trade union pressure group than a gang of Russian nationalists like the CP in the industrial towns.

A.L.B.

PART 1

between the things produced for sale, which we call commodities. If, under average conditions of production in a given industry, it takes 24 hours of socially necessary labour to produce a certain commodity, then that commodity will have the same value as other commodities which also take 24 hours of socially necessary labour.

However, if one firm in that industry is inefficient and takes 30 hours, the value of its product will still be the social average of 24 hours. On the other hand, if an exceptionally efficient firm can do the job in 20 hours on average it is still the socially necessary labour that counts.

It has to be borne in mind that when we talk about producing a commodity, we mean all of the processes that are necessary for its production. Suppose we assume as an example that the socially necessary labour for producing a bicycle is 24 hours, this means not merely the time taken in assembling the bicycle but all the necessary processes, from obtaining the rubber and metal and other materials, right down to the finished product, including any necessary transportation of materials including wear and tear of factory machinery and the consumption of electricity or other power to drive the machinery, and so on. Having taken as an example that it takes 24 hours of socially necessary labour to produce a bicycle, let us now carry it a stage further and assume that a suit of clothes also takes 24 hours, then the bicycle and the suit of clothes would be of equal value.

Let us also assume that 24 hours of socially necessary labour would produce one ounce weight of gold; then we have three different kinds of articles with different uses and of different materials and different weights, but all having the same value. Now one stage further is to turn our one ounce of gold into money and to assume, which is approximately true in Great Britain before 1914, that the Government by law fixed the pound sterling, or the sovereign as it was called, at one quarter ounce weight of gold, then if you had 4 gold sovereigns, or £4, you had about one ounce of gold, and on our assumption, its value was the same as the bicycle or the suit of clothes.

Now it would be very simple if we could say that price and value are identical. We would then be able to explain all prices of all articles simply by saying that the price of the bicycle and of the suit of clothes was £4 and that the prices of all other commodities would be according to their value, measured in terms of the amount of socially necessary labour required in their production. Unfortunately, we cannot treat the matter as simply as that. We cannot say, in other words, that price and value of individual commodities are identical. In actual practice it is rarely so, because all sorts of other factors come into play.

When Marx dealt with this subject in Chapter 6 of his pamphlet *Value, Price and Profit*, and said that commodities on an average sell at their values, he added that this was apart from the effect of monopolies and some other modifications, although he did not deal with these modifications either in *Value, Price and Profit* or in the first volume of *Capital*. As the chief purpose of this series is to deal with the general rise of prices—that is to say, inflation—it is not necessary here to deal with all these modifications. It will be sufficient merely to refer to them briefly and to refer to sources of information on some of the others.

Now the first cause of deviations of prices from their normal price arises through what is called supply and demand,

when although the value of a commodity remains unchanged, its price may rise or fall because of variations of supply and demand. To take an example, suppose that storms at sea prevent fishing trawlers from entering a port. This interrupts the supply of fish and immediately prices go up. When later on the trawlers do arrive, probably a large number of them together, and all land their catches of fish, then the prices will fall again. These are examples of variations in supply and demand.

The other factor referred to by Marx was monopoly. Monopoly is a particular form of interruption of supply. If a company controls all or most of the supply of an article, it can force up the price until such time as new sources of supply come into operation or until substitute articles come on the market and break the monopoly. In Great Britain

for many years, there have been monopolies in alcohol and tobacco which are created not by the companies but by the Government. The Government controls the production and import of alcohol and tobacco and can thus establish a monopoly price far above the value of these commodities and can use that monopoly price as a means of skimming off excess profit for government revenue. There is also a kind of opposite example, and that is government subsidies. Whereas a monopoly such as those referred to operated by the government can force up the prices far above value, the government can and has for many years subsidised certain foodstuffs so that they can be sold well below their value. What happens in effect is that the government pays the producers to sell the article cheaply. (To be continued.)

H.

PARTY NEWS

Our Annual Conference this year was especially memorable. We had four members of the companion party in the U.S.A. over here—Sam and Ida Orner, Lenny and Anne Fenton. Theirs was no holiday visit; they were worked off their feet, speaking at many meetings.

Conference discussed a lot of future activity, and the first fruits of this were not long in coming. Up and down the country, we ran very successful May Day meetings. In Trafalgar Square, a large audience contributed a generous collection and bought about £12 worth of literature. Big literature sales were also a feature of our meetings in Glasgow. Other meetings were held in Nottingham, Birmingham, Bristol and Swansea, with similarly encouraging results. A small band of members also went to Hyde Park and ran a worthwhile meeting.

A good start, this, to our Summer propaganda season, which looks like being one of the busiest on record.

Readers will be interested in the excellent activities of Glasgow Branch. During the 1964/65 propaganda season the branch held 112 outdoor meetings (25 in Edinburgh), 35 indoor meetings and one debate. Literature sales totalled £45 and collections amounted to £116. This is a most impressive record for any organisation and our members in Glasgow are to be congratulated on their efforts. Anyone wishing to take part in Glasgow activity, or any organisation, (political party, trade union branches, etc) requiring a member to address them, should please write to S. Donaldson, 37 Beltane Street, Glasgow, C.3. Visitors are welcome to the Branch meetings held regularly at 163a Berkeley Street. Monday at 7.30 p.m.

The Brighton Group hopes to run regular fortnightly outdoor meetings with the aid of London Branches during the summer months. They have also received an acceptance to debate from a local Labour Councillor.

A new group has been formed at Kidder-

minster—see the Party Directory—its first meeting was held on the 12th May and it is hoped the group will shortly have a meeting place for regular monthly meetings. Sunderland Group is meeting regularly and anticipates extending its activities

during the coming months.

Swansea Branch report a successful May Day meeting, the best for some years. The branch is becoming much more active and will be giving details of future branch and propaganda programmes in the near future.

MEETINGS

ISLINGTON

Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd., N7

Wednesday, July 14th, 8pm

CRISIS IN VIETNAM

Wednesday, July 28th, 8 pm

LABOUR & INCOMES POLICY

NOTTINGHAM

Committee Room, Co-op Hall

Heathcoat Street

Sunday, July 4th, 2.30 pm

STEVENAGE

Red Lion, High St., Old Stevenage

Monday, July 5th, 8 pm

THE SPGB IMAGE

Speaker: Mr. J. D. McLuckie, M.A.

(Lecturer in Sociology, Hatfield

College of Technology)

Monday, July 19th, 7.30 pm

Joint discussion with

Local Anarchist Group

PADDINGTON

Royal Oak, York Street, W1

Wednesdays, 8.30 pm

July 14th

RUSSIA'S COLONIAL PROBLEM

Speaker: E. Grant

July 21st

EDUCATION IN DENMARK

Speaker: A. Petersen (Copenhagen)

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OUTDOOR MEETINGS

LONDON

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 and 6 pm

East Street, Walworth

June 4th and 18th (noon)

June 11th and 25th (11 am)

Beresford Square, Woolwich, 8 pm

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1—2 pm

Earls Court

July 5th and 19th, 8pm

Wednesdays

Charing Cross Tube Station

(Villiers Street) 8 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30—2 pm

Earls Court, 8 pm

OXFORD

Martyrs Memorial, St. Giles

Sundays, July 4th and 18th, 7.30 pm

STEVENAGE

Clock Town Square, New Town

Saturdays July 10th and 24th, 3 pm

NOTTINGHAM

Sunday, July 4th, Slab Square 7 p.m.

A London speaker will be in Nottingham for 2 weeks from July 17th and will be holding several mid-week and week-end meetings.

BRIGHTON

The Fishmarket

Sundays, July 4th and 18th, 3 pm

Japan, tough competitor

The products of Japanese industry have always been strong competitors in the markets of the world.

In many cases, they have beaten British goods by sheer superiority in delivery, price and quality. Because many British workers regard the Japanese as inferior people, their economic victories have always been difficult to explain away. The solution to this was to popularise three stories, all of them designed to illustrate that the Japanese were treacherous little Oriental monkeys. This impression stirred up a lot of feelings which were successfully exploited after Pearl Harbour.

Briefly, the stories were: That all Japanese worker also gets a lot of what a time when British miners were continuously fighting against enforced cuts in their pay; That the Japanese were incapable of giving birth to an original idea and made up for this by simply pirating the designs of other countries (as if this was confined to the industries of only one country—international patents actions are going on all the time); That Japan was a country where only light industry could flourish—the heavier stuff had to be left to the sturdy Europeans (unemployed shipyard and steel mill workers could be excused for not appreciating the force of this point).

If there was ever any truth in these stories, there is very little in them today. Wages in Japan now compare with those in most other industrial countries; the Japanese worker also gets a lot of what are called fringe benefits—cheap housing, holidays, food and so on.

Japanese products are now becoming known for the originality of their design. They pioneered the mass production of the portable transistor radio (blast them). The Honda motor cycle now commands sixty per cent of the United States market. They have recently introduced a new car—the Daihatsu Compagno Berlina—to the British market which is notable for the number of "extras" (fog lamps, stainless steel bumpers, etc.) it has, all included in the near competitive price.

Other countries, in fact, are now stealing Japanese ideas. The plague of transistor radios is now being fed by British products. A Dutch shipbuilding firm has defied the patent on a Japanese-designed liner bow and American and

West German firms have recently bought a new steel-making process from Japan.

Finally, Japanese heavy industry is booming ahead. This year, the steel industry there expects to produce thirty-nine million tons of crude steel (in 1949 production was nil—the British industry's capacity of crude steel for 1965 was estimated in the recent White Paper at about thirty million tons.) Japanese shipyards expect to lay down the keels of two and a half million tons of shipping in 1965.

All of this means that, even after the pre-war methods have been discarded, Japan remains a strong rival in the world of capitalism. Indeed, under a powerful central control from the government, she is probably now a tougher proposition than ever.

In this process, several favourite myths have been laid low. This is not to say that, if at some time in the future Japan once more becomes involved in an international dispute, other myths, equally false, will not be concocted to explain away the immovable fact that the nations of capitalism are perpetually in dispute over the division of the spoils of exploitation.

For Queen and country

It would be better for everyone, including the young people themselves, if the antics of university students were not taken so seriously.

Universities are often among the most active units of what Peter Simple calls the Protest Industry. But when the undergraduates leave their youth behind them they usually forget the restless days of protest and fall into line with capitalism's requirements of docility.

This is the background to the recent Queen and Country debate at the Oxford Union, which aroused such a lot of criticism, most of it based on the incorrect assumption that the motion was going to be carried.

It would be interesting to know what all those indignant letter-writers think about the Oxford students, now that they have signified that they will fight for Queen and Country.

In any case, the indignation was always misplaced. It is not uncommon for university unions to debate—and sometimes to pass—motions which sound very daring. In 1914, the Oxford Union voted against Britain being a member of

the *Triple Entente*; in 1927 the Cambridge Union was in favour of pacifism; a few years later Oxford said that they preferred the Red Flag to the Union Jack.

And, of course, in 1933 Oxford decided that in no circumstances would they fight for King and Country.

Well, what happened? Among the supporters of that famous decision were at least two members of the present government whose present policy, as we all know, is to persuade other people to fight for Queen and Country in Malaysia, Arabia and other points East of Suez. These two are Anthony Greenwood and Michael Stewart.

It is difficult to trace what happened to most of the other 275 young people who voted for the motion. According to the proposer of this year's motion, in 1939 they were "first in the fight against facism."

In other words, they *did* fight for King and Country after all, although perhaps under the deception that it was for some other, more worthy, motive. Apparently, they did not expect the British ruling class to try to mislead anyone about the causes of the Second World War.

In the event, the rebellious students of 1933 were as easy to deceive as any mental clodhopper who had never got within sight of the dreaming spires.

It is said that many statesmen—Hitler, Joseph Kennedy—accepted the 1933 motion as proof that the British working class would not fight in another war. If this is true, it only goes to show how badly capitalist politicians can misjudge a situation.

The 1965 debate, then, should not be given undue significance. Perhaps it was a publicity stunt, aimed at needling exactly the sort of people whose hostility was provoked. There is no reason to suppose that, if a war came, the rebellious students will not once again consign their university days to an embarrassed memory, and go dutifully out to fight for the interests of British capitalism. (Perhaps it will be in alliance with Nasser and Nkrumah, as Sir Richard Acland, who supported the motion, would like.)

Whatever the Queen and Country debate may suggest, of one thing it is innocent. It had no hint of enlightenment about the cause of capitalism's wars, nor of determination to oppose them.

For university students and for the rest of the working class, that enlightenment is in the future.

China in Africa

An unexpected result of nuclear weapons in the hands of great powers, and the precarious Balance of Terror that has resulted, has been to increase rather than decrease the bargaining power of small nations.

Contrary to what might have been expected a decade or so ago, we have witnessed many cheeky acts of defiance by small and industrially backward nations towards great powers, which could probably overrun them in half a day without even using their nuclear weapons.

Attacking embassies and burning flags on the one hand, and nationalising the assets of some vast combine on the other, have become quite common place.

The smaller powers bank on the presumption that any move against them by one block, will bring the others hot foot to their rescue. Not, needless to say, because of any love towards the nation in question, but because they fear that an advantage may be gained by their opponents. While the giants manoeuvre for position, the little fellows nip about between their feet.

This is risky, as there is always a danger of getting trodden on. If the issue is really big enough the great powers will go ahead, and the small country is liable to become a graveyard. But in this jungle of Capitalism all methods must be used to forward the interest of the ruling class. One of the most successful ways of doing this is for a small power to try to milk a large power, or several if possible, for economic aid while committing themselves to as little as possible.

This position has been spotlighted again by the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-lai to Africa, and his concentration on small and weak Tanzania. After all China is one of the world's great powers and Chou En-lai is one of their top politicians. Palmerston or Bismark did not trail around, personally, to out of the way places, but times have changed and the struggle has become much more acute. No advantage, however small, can be passed over and so the visits of Heads of States, all over the place, goes on.

Chou En-lai appears to have had a rather mixed reception, as illustrated by President Kenyatta's attack. Chou En-lai's statement, on his last visit that "revolu-

tionary prospects in Africa are excellent," did not go down very well with the new African leaders.

After all having just pulled off one upheaval, which has put them in the saddle, they are not likely to welcome another, which would probably put them out of it.

German visit

If it is true that history repeats itself, this is only another way of saying that capitalism's problems are as persistent and repetitive as the ruling classes' methods of dealing with them.

In 1904 Edward VII paid his famous visit to France, which sealed the alliance known as the *Entente Cordiale*, bringing to a close a century of enmity between Britain and France.

The visit was hailed as a great step towards peace—some especially wretched commentators actually went so far as to call the lewd and gluttonous King Edward the Peacemaker.

They probably were aware that the Franco-British alliance was made not in the cause of peace but as a shield against a greater and more immediate threat than the two countries offered to each other.

In 1904 the expansive menace of Germany was taking definite shape and the future was unmistakable to the diplomats and the politicians. So the *Entente* was sealed, and the King packed off to France to give public, if vulgar, evidence of it.

Since then, there has been fifty years of persistent enmity between the British and German ruling classes. This situation had to end sometime, as the power line-up changed, as new markets were developed, as new weapons came on to the scene, as new threats emerged.

Both Britain and Germany are now united against the threat of Soviet Russia; both countries want to see Russian imperialism in Europe contained.

YUGOSLAV SELF MANAGEMENT continued from page 116

decisions had been reached at the Macedonia delegates' conference. At the time of writing, the Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina conferences have yet to meet, but it's a fair bet they will follow Mr. Kardelj's "advice".

These conferences are part of modern Yugoslavia's machinery for shaping the

At the same time, both countries are now at odds with French ambitions, personified so aptly in the massive figure of de Gaulle, to see Europe united against both Russian and American encroachments—but under French domination.

The British ruling class are still wooing the Common Market; Germany is by no means hostile to these advances but once again the obstruction comes from Paris. (Britain is currently investigating the back alleys into Europe; witness Wilson's recent visit to Vienna, where he pleaded for closer relations between E.E.C. and E.F.T.A.)

Thus the interests of the German and British ruling classes coincide at several important points. In addition, Germany has shown over the past twenty years that the expansionist ambitions of the first half of this century are laid to rest.

However powerful a competitor Germany may be, there is no sign of a resurgence of the explosive nationalism of 1914 and 1939. The time is ripe for another *Entente Cordiale* to be sealed—this time between Germany and Britain, directed partly against France. Thus history repeats itself, although the principal actors have changed their places.

This was the symbolism of last May's visit by the Queen to Germany. She was doing there the same sordid job as her great-grandfather did in France in 1904.

Some German newspapers complained that the Queen did not smile enough at the welcoming crowds. Perhaps she was tired, or bored, or fed up with her well-paid job as the figurehead of British capitalism. But any politician could have told her (and for all we know one or two have) that she was making a serious mistake.

Capitalism's diplomacy demands that no matter how devious the bargaining, how ruthless the treachery, the leading public actors do not give way to any human feelings, but all the time smile, darn you, smile.

pattern of its state capitalism. One does not have to be an expert to see who gets the lion's share of the cake. Just like their counterparts elsewhere, Yugoslav workers have a long way to go before they establish a life for themselves really worth living.

R.G.S. (Trieste, Italy).

Turgenev's "Virgin Soil"

It is a popular misconception of Marxist materialism that it can be used to establish a rigidly determining link between economic factors and the appearance of, for example, works of literature. This is a vulgar and mechanistic interpretation of what materialism sets out to explain. There is no law of economic inevitability that provides a formula for a determining link between economic factors and the creative ability that appears from time to time uniquely in the personality of one artist. Nevertheless, the social framework provides the possibilities within which the talent of artists expresses itself and comes to fruition.

Moreover, the whole history of literature, its form, and subject matter, can be shown to have a developing relationship with the development of all other aspects of society and ultimately hinges upon economic evolution. Especially can the work of 19th century Russian writers present a clear and explicit example of how literature can be closely involved in political controversies and can reflect the conflict of social forces which are ultimately of a class nature.

Due to the intolerance and authoritarianism of Russian life, there was a complete absence of freedom of speech in print. There was no freedom whatsoever for the kind of political pamphleteering that was common in Western Europe. Even so, great controversies did rage and the tradition grew up that viewpoints were expressed through the medium of fiction. Turgenev was one writer who used his art as a vehicle for polemics and pamphleteering, so much so, that after incurring the Tsar's displeasure for his polemic tone, he went into exile in 1855 and spent the remainder of his life in Baden and Paris.

In Turgenev's novel "Virgin Soil", the major forces of Russian 19th century society are shown interlocked in close conflict. The character of Kollomietzev personifies the rigidity of the established landed aristocracy and typifies what Engels described in 1874 as "... an oriental despotism whose arbitrariness we in the west simply cannot imagine. A despotism which from day to day comes into more glaring contradiction with the views of the enlightened classes and in particular with those of the rapidly developing bourgeoisie."

In drawing the character of Kollomietzev, Turgenev describes the affected arrogant postures of the landed nobility. "The only principle that I acknowledge," remarks Kollomietzev, "is the whip." He holds the toiling masses in complete con-

tempt, regarding them as less than animals, and sees the church and the government as necessarily oppressive instruments of upper class authority. He sees his own social role as that of upholding privilege, and leading a life as remote as possible from useful production. He despises even what he considers to be the vulgarity of the capitalists' interest in factories and commercial profit.

Sipiagin is a man of property who is interested in factory production. In outlook, he is more flexible, liberal minded and free from the stultifying prejudices of his fellow landowner. In the novel he goes to some lengths to win over into his own employment an efficient factory manager. Such competent technical men in Russia were rare.

The novel also includes a collection of revolutionaries who are referred to as "socialists." They are forced to operate underground, as a secret society. Though they are inspired and dedicated, they conduct their conspiracies with a completely false and unrealistic view of Russian social consciousness. One of the revolutionaries insists that soon "... there would be nothing to hinder them from making a 'beginning' as the masses refused to wait any longer!"

They cannot come to terms with the general ignorance that precludes any useful point of contact between the peasants and their own well-developed ideas, and cover failure with self-reproach, lamenting their own inadequacies. "He wrote a long letter to his friend Silin about the whole thing, in which he bitterly regretted his incapacity, putting it down to the vile education he had received and his hopelessly aesthetic nature." In the book, the activities of the revolutionaries inevitably end in failure and disillusion.

In his essay "Social Relations in Russia", Engels predicted revolution in the offing, but it must be said that he did not extend its possibilities to the introduction of Socialism. The farthest that he would go was in saying that "... it will destroy at one blow the last, so far intact, reserve of the entire European (landed) reaction," which of course it did.

Turgenev's "Virgin Soil" is about the unresolved nature of 19th century Russian politics, and its stifling effect upon the historical demand for industrialisation. The longer the balance of economic forces that underlay this political indecision continued, the more critical became the dislocation between dynamic European capitalism and the faltering vacillation of Russian society. At the same time the Russian state was inextric-

ably involved in Western Europe, whether it desired it or not, especially about the waging of war.

It is a matter of history now that the discrepant relationship between Russia and Europe reached its critical climax in October 1917. With the decisive shock of the Bolshevik revolution, Russia at last became unreservedly committed to the building of industrial capitalism.

Although the characters in Turgenev's novel represent economic and political forces, except for two who are deliberate caricatures, this does not diminish them as human personalities. As the novel unfolds itself, they act and react with convincing realism. This is history in microcosm, with men, seldom conscious of their historical role, clashing as individuals in specific situations, prejudiced, bigoted, pragmatic, idealistic, but ultimately intelligible within a framework of material struggle and class conflict.

P.L.

This article has been compiled from notes taken at a recent discussion at the Bromley Group.

OPTIMISM AND SOCIALISM

Where then do optimism and Socialism come in? What is their practical relation to the Socialist movement? Optimism claims that this is the best of all possible worlds. All apparent pairs are but the means by which the all-seeing Father secures our ultimate happiness. To attempt to secure it on our own by a social revolution is both impious and unnecessary. The Lord will provide!

Pessimism, on the other hand, bewails our impotence against the hand of fate. Sorrow and death are on every hand, and external forces are stronger than we; to hope to control them is useless. The deepest desires are but a mockery; for happiness is impossible and an illusion. Socialism? Pooh! If you abolished poverty tomorrow it would re-appear the day after.

In short, both creeds accept the capitalist system as inevitable and necessary. Optimism is simply the endeavour of the ruling class to foist their own smug satisfaction with themselves and their system to their slaves as the only correct opinion and guide of life. It is rejected by all who have passed through the fire and floods of working-class existence and found it horribly wanting in practical comfort even in spite of previous prejudice in its favour.

Pessimism is but the inevitable reaction based on disappointment in optimism; a despair of capitalism coupled with an ignorance of any means of ending it.

From the Socialist Standard July 1915

The Passing Show

Pensions and Hypocrisy

I am looking at the Labour Party's manifesto for the 1964 General Election. In the section dealing with "social security", I see:—

For those already retired and for widows, an Incomes Guarantee will be introduced. This will lay down a new national minimum benefit. Those whose incomes fall below the new minimum will receive as of right, and without recourse to National Assistance, an income supplement.

Now I will ignore for the moment the fact that it was the previous Labour Government which introduced the "means-tested National Assistance benefits" as the same booklet dubs them a few lines further up the same page. Nor will I make too much of the information (given by Assistance Board Chairman Lord Runcorn, in May) that some 71 percent of the total of weekly allowances made were to elderly people, about 1,386,000 of them at the end of last year. I will ignore all this, if only to avoid having to listen to the tedious reply that pensions have already been raised by a few bob and that anyway there has not been time yet to introduce more far-reaching measures.

Whatever their intentions may have been, the Labour Party never seemed in much doubt before the election of the plight in which many pensioners found themselves. Indeed, it was only the Tories who, in face of umpteen surveys of one kind or another and a mass of statistics, tried to pretend that pensioners were not so badly off; and they lost the election anyway. Labour's policy was to exploit this situation and promise to remedy it.

And what do you think would be the way to do it—that's if you are naive enough to think that such problems can be dealt with effectively under capitalism? Why, to give the pensioners an immediate and very, very substantial increase, of course. And if you are that innocent, you may think that this is Labour's intention any day now. But you would be wrong, very wrong. After donkey's years of books, pamphlets and enough newspaper cuttings on the subject to fill a library, all we get is—just another survey.

Ah, but you haven't heard the best of it yet. This survey really has the edge on all the others. Just listen:—

... 11,000 pensioners in Britain are to be interviewed to see how they are managing and to find out any difficulties they may

be having, the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance said yesterday. (*Guardian*, 14.5.65.)

Just read those words again slowly and savour the full, damnable impertinence of them. And when you have stopped gasping at their sheer unctious condescension perhaps, with me, you will view them as just another exercise in the hypocrisy in which all governments dabble. On one hand, there will be efforts to give the impression of earnest and helpful action, and on the other a nett result, as far as the pensioners are concerned, of nothing. And if by now the Ministry do not know the sort of "difficulties they may be having", then they must be deaf and blind to a scandal which has been common knowledge for years.

Old age pensioners are generally out of the run of productivity so beloved of capitalism's economists and politicians, and that's why they are chucked on to the scrap heap. It also explains why they are so conspicuously unsuccessful in their efforts to secure any worthwhile improvement in their miserable lot. They just haven't the bargaining power of their younger brothers and sisters who are still at work.

But they do have a vote and there are some millions of them, so they cannot be ignored entirely. This explains why the Labour Party, among others, is careful to include them in its election pledges, only to try and fob them off with a crumb or two and a patronising pat on the head afterwards. Yes, pensioners are at the bottom of the priority list, and capitalism will see that they stay there.

Nothing is sacred

When he was a Labour M.P., Lord (then Mr.) Brockway talked once in the Commons on the sacredness of a newly born child. No doubt he believed what he said, and if you were to ask many people about this today, they would probably agree with him.

While not denying that these attitudes may be all very worthwhile within the limitations of their social conditions, we should not deceive ourselves that childhood is really considered all that sacred in a modern capitalist society. True, the young ones are given extra attention by the authorities, but the outstanding reason for this is that they are soon to become the new workers, and capitalism

has long learned the need of an assured supply of labour power. But sacredness? Not on your life.

If you have any doubts on this, try to find an hour to waste watching commercial TV at some time or the other. Note the frequent interruptions for adverts, and in particular the number of times they feature children—some of them little more than toddlers. Children cramming revolting quantities of sweets into their mouths, children guzzling gallons of soft drinks—both very questionable from a health point of view, or children talking in a most unchildish manner about the effect of this or that detergent on Mummy's hands (silly Mummy believes it too, apparently). The firms who purvey this rubbish are well aware of the feelings of tenderness which are roused in an adult by the sight of a child, and they exploit them quite shamelessly in the name of that which is sacred before all else—the profit motive.

If you think this is far fetched, take a more critical look at that TV screen next time. Nothing is left untouched; wherever human feelings can be publicised to commercial advantage, the ad-man digs his claws in deep. His subjects range wide, from boy and girl love to the pride of a housewife in a basketful of clean clothes at the end of a washday (Alan Freeman exercises a particularly obnoxious technique here).

And have you got a tiger in your tank? This is perhaps the most blatant of the advertising stunts yet, and to all accounts it has paid off very handsomely. Maybe the sheer cheek of it has had something to do with its success—free publicity through the sticker on the car window—and here again, the kids do not escape. Listen to Miss Molly Tarrant ("Mass observation and motivational research specialist") in *The Guardian* on May 31st:—

Children might have something to do with it... Many drivers will agree to put a sticker on if their children ask for it... although often the driver uses the children as an excuse.

No, nothing is sacred under capitalism, except the profit motive, which is not after all surprising. If capitalism is to be assured of continuous and unfailing support by its workers, then the necessary indoctrination in its debased standards must start at the earliest possible age, in all sorts of ways—some more subtle than others.

Continued next page

THE PASSING SHOW

Gaspers

"Rising prices are no new phenomenon. They have faced every government since the war, as an intractable problem, to which no solution has yet been found." (Mr. George Brown—Commons debate 12.5.65.)

"China is conducting necessary nuclear

tests . . . and is developing the nuclear weapon for the purpose of . . . abolishing all nuclear weapons." (Chinese communique, following their second atomic explosion, 14.5.65)

"Both our countries are totally opposed to the use of force for the settlement of international disputes." (Indian Premier

Mr. Shastri, speaking in Moscow 12.5.65.)

"In the field of National Assistance the number of clients today, at nearly two million, is undoubtedly much greater than Beveridge envisaged it would be." (Lord Runcorn, National Assistance Board Chairman, 15.5.65.)

E.T.C.

'Workers control' in Yugoslavia

Since the end of the war, the Yugoslav economy has been affected by a number of administrative changes, called by various names (not all of them complimentary). The ruling class have dubbed them "selfmanagement". To the Western economists they may be better known under the heading of decentralisation. How, when and why was selfmanagement introduced? What does it mean to the working class? How does it work in practice? Is it really a way to Socialism? These are the questions I shall try to answer here.

To shed some light on the rather obscure and misleading interpretations of the term "Selfmanagement", you should really start your investigations around 1945, when large doses of state control were administered to the economy and misnamed "Communism". But to play down the uncomfortable reality of capitalism with its wages system, the swindle was justified simply by debasing the old Socialist slogan "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" so that it ran "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work," and calling it Marxism. The privileged class of non-producers existed and operated to a large extent through the state machine, which generally regulated and controlled production, and this seems to be an outstanding feature of some of the newer capitalist countries, taking their example from Soviet Russia.

But whatever the politicians chose to call it, the painful facts of capitalist life in Yugoslavia were what demanded their attention, for the usual signs of the class struggle were appearing. Workers were pushing for better wages and conditions, to be met with the usual dreary reply with which you in England will be all too familiar—that their claims could not be met unless production was increased, which in practice meant harder work and longer hours.

Now workers in Yugoslavia are no different from their brothers elsewhere in that they will support any particular method of running the system, regardless of its name, if they think it will give them a better life. As one writer confessed:-

It was impossible to call upon the working class by promising a development of "Socialist" ideas; it was necessary to offer them a material incentive. (*Social Self-management in Yugoslavia*, by Stane Koncic, Belgrade, 1961)

So Belgrade took action to blunt the edge of workers' demands by setting up workers' councils in all firms, with the avowed aim of reducing and eventually abolishing state interference in production. By 1951 "Selfmanagement" had arrived.

But before we go any further, let us see how the workers' councils operate. They are elected through secret ballot of all members of a firm or organisation and their duties are varied. They decide what and how much to produce, and eventually the prices. They pay a part of the resulting profit (six percent of the whole turnover) to the State direct every month, and they have the authority to make decisions on investment of their capital. When necessary they can approach the *Narodna Banka* (state bank) for loans and these are credited according to the value of machinery and plant.

In the sphere of employment, the councils have the right to engage and dismiss workers, and to decide the magnitude of wages according to level of sales. But by present rules, wages must not fall below 75 per cent nor rise above 125 percent of the figure fixed in the wages books. Councils can also make rules about relations between management and men and fix the length of the working day. Finally, they have the right to decide on amalgamation with other firms or on liquidation. Liquidation

is in any case compulsory when a firm no longer runs at a profit, and can be avoided only by presenting a report to the state chamber of commerce, with concrete proposals for the firm's recovery.

After fourteen years of operation, self-management is well on its way, but where to? This is doubtless a question which many a worker is asking himself, and the answer is that it is just another variation in the day-to-day running of the capitalist system. True it means that the workers are given a much wider direct responsibility for production, but the nett result is no different from any other capitalist country. A small class of parasites still lives well on the surplus value extracted from workers. According to *Statisticki Kalendar FNRJ*, the total production has risen by 162 percent in the last ten years, but in the last seventeen years, the standard of living has risen by about seven percent.

Yugoslav workers do not have to consult any statistics to see the large difference between their humble homes and the luxury villas of the communist party bigshots. Yugoslav T.U.C. Chairman Vukmanovic-Tempo has in fact complained bitterly in the daily paper *Liberation* (14/11/64) that "the standard of living is rising too slowly and many promises made to the workers have never been kept." To which Federal Parliament Chairman Edward Kardelj had the impudence to reply:—

The sharp difference between the increase in production and the standard of living is not due to selfmanagement, but to not enough selfmanagement.

This reply was also in the nature of a "strong recommendation" and as such, was taken up at the delegates' conference of the Peoples' Republic of Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro, held at the beginning of the year. On March 26th Belgrade Radio announced that similar

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VIETNAM
NATIONAL INCOMES POLICY
PROFIT MOTIVE IN RUSSIA
NUCLEAR WASTE

AUGUST 1965 6d

**REMEMBER
HIROSHIMA?
20 YEARS AGO**

SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address. No meetings in August.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 6th Aug. at 7 Cyril Road, Boxley Heath (Tel. BEX 1950) and 20th Aug. at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham SE9 (Tel. KIP 1796) Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 7.30 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 37 Bellane Street, Glasgow, C3.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KENSINGTON Fridays 8 pm, 55 Meadvale Road, Ealing, W5. (temporarily). Correspondence: R. Cain, 35 Waltham Road, Southall, Middlesex.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Neslon, above address.

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

KIDDERMINSTER Enquiries: J. Amos, 31 Sion Hill, Broadwaters. Meets 2nd Wednesday in month at 7.30 pm, Station Inn, Iffield, Comberton Road, Kidderminster.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

visitors are cordially invited to every meeting

MID HERTS Meets 1st Monday in month at The Red Lion, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel: Hatfield 4802.

NOTTINGHAM will next meet on Sunday, 1st Aug., at 2.30 pm in the Committee Room, Co-operative Hall, Heathcoat Street, Nottingham. Enquiries: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive, Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesdays 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Thursdays (5th and 19th Aug.) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (2nd and 16th Aug.) 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowod, Llangyfelach, Swansea.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (12th and 26th Aug.) in month, 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (13th and 27th Aug.) in month, 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Meets last Friday in month, at 7.30 pm, The International Centre, George Street. Enquiries: A. Atkinson, 4 St. Martins Road, Ashton on Mersey, Sale, Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

SUNDERLAND Details of meetings from P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Nuclear waste

It was 20 years ago this month that the world witnessed the terrifying spectacle of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Twenty years of gradually mounting evidence to help piece together like a jigsaw, a background of cynical and calculated brutality that is almost without parallel. Twenty years in which the soundness of the Socialist Party's stand on the whole question of war in all its forms has been again and again vindicated.

This will no doubt be a month of commemoration and protest. From statesmen and politicians of every variety we may expect the usual tired platitudes, lies and hypocrisy as they spuriously talk about peace and prepare for another war. CND will be well to the fore, attempting to deal with nuclear weapons in isolation from their root cause—Capitalism. But society cannot put the scientific and technical clock back. From this time forward man's ability to manufacture nuclear weapons is here to stay. The only truly reliable way to "Ban the Bomb" is to establish a society where human relationships could not possibly cause war or call nuclear weapons into use. Only world Socialism really guarantees that Hiroshima or Nagasaki could not happen again.

We have felt it important to return to the question again this month because apart from the threat to humanity's existence in a world armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons, it illustrates well a point we have made many times—the shocking wastefulness with which Capitalism not only squanders society's material resources, but squanders humanity itself.

We live in a world capable of a tremendous productive effort. The work that went into the first atom bombs must have been colossal, yet it pales into insignificance when compared with the picture today. America's defence expenditure (never "offence" expenditure) last year reached the staggering estimated figure of \$54,000 millions. Comparable figures for Great Britain were £2,043 million, West Germany 20,929 million Deutschmarks, and France 23,485 million Francs. The U.S. contribution alone to NATO forces included eight hundred intercontinental ballistic missiles (nuclear if necessary) and over three hundred Polaris submarines. At the beginning of last year, Soviet defence minister Marshall Malinovsky was boasting of Russia's *hundred megaton* bomb and the missiles that were available to carry it to any part of the globe.

And this is the spectacle which has been the curse of the capitalist world, to come into still sharper focus in the post-war years. Millions go ragged and hungry and badly housed, while unsaleable food piles up in the warehouses and backwater barges, and vast resources of human ingenuity and productive effort are squandered in turning out yet bigger and more destructive weapons. Not only that. There are now five runners in the nuclear arms race with at least two more—W. Germany and India—thinking of entering the slips.

Even whilst CND have been campaigning, more nations have entered the nuclear field. The bombs are bigger, and there are more of them. CND have protested against one aspect of capitalism's wastefulness. They will miss the important point until they realise that the need is to remove Capitalism itself. Gigantic waste which is horrifying in its effects is synonymous with Capitalism in every direction, from nuclear terror, to world hunger. The campaign against these problems outside the context of the demand for Socialism cannot carry the prospect of success.

It is when we realise this that we see the urgent necessity for the removal of capitalism and its replacement with a world of common ownership, for this is the only way to tackle such a problem. Only then could we be sure that society's resources would be harnessed to serve human needs instead of the requirements of the profit motive. In a Socialist system there would be abundant wealth to meet everyone's needs, but waste would be anathema—a thing of the past. Such conditions would make possible the development of human abilities on a scale undreamed of today, for the concern of all would be to produce and distribute the very best of which they were capable. Certainly a goal worth striving for; but more than that, one which becomes a matter of greater urgency with the passing of each day.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

Remember Hiroshima?

WHEN the aircraft carrying the atomic bomb appeared above Hiroshima early in the morning of 6th August 1945, the people of the city were not especially alarmed.

They assumed that it was the reconnaissance plane which every day reported on the weather over a nearby lake, used as a rendezvous point by the American bombers. For months, the B-29's had been hammering at one Japanese city after another; in August 1945 there were only two of any importance which had not suffered a heavy raid. One of these was Hiroshima.

Uneasily, the city was organising its defences. Every home was required to have a concrete water tank readily accessible for fire-fighting. Many houses were being torn down to make fire breaks. But the Super-Fortresses kept roaring past to the lake, and swung away to other targets. The people of Hiroshima became convinced that the Americans were saving something especially horrible for them.

All these fears came to a head, at eight-fifteen that morning, when the bomb flashed in the sky and the blast roared down and out and eighty thousand human beings died in a way which nobody had ever known before. More than four square miles of Hiroshima was destroyed; within a year the death toll had reached one hundred and forty thousand.

The effects of the bomb were gruesomely strange, and this gave rise to panic rumours about what had happened. Some people said the Americans had sprayed petrol over the city and set light to it. Others thought that a cloud of magnesium had been dropped, and ignited by high tension wires. Unfamiliar and menacing things were happening to the survivors of the bomb. Their hair fell out, their gums bled, trifling cuts stayed open and festered for weeks. Pregnant women suffered miscarriages and premature births; countless babies were born dead. People who had no visible injuries or burns quietly and simply died. And as if in mockery at this, weeds and wild flowers of all sorts flourished under the bomb's rays and grew in profusion over the wreckage of the city.

President Truman announced that the weapon he had launched against Hiroshima had "... more power than twenty thousand tons of T.N.T. ... more than two thousand times the blast power of the British Grand Slam, which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare." Although the people who were dying and suffering at Hiroshima did not appreciate it, history had been made at their expense.

In the United States, the *New Yorker* added its own little bit of history by devoting its entire edition, for the first time in its life, to a single feature. This was a report by John Hersey on the experiences of six people—a German Catholic priest, an office girl, a Protestant Minister, two doctors and a windowed housewife—who had lived through the destruction of Hiroshima. Hersey's story was immediately famous, and in November 1946 it was published in this country as a shilling Penguin (*Hiroshima*, by John Hersey—Penguin Books).

Here was the reality behind the politicians' statements and the statisticians' tables and the scientists' measurements. These people had been crushed and wounded and frightened by the bomb. They had seen inexpressible horrors. Hersey told their story with restraint and sympathy, leaving the enormity of Hiroshima to speak for itself. Only once did he stand in judgement, and that was when he was telling what happened to the office girl when the bomb went off:

... the bookcases right behind her swooped forward and the contents threw her down, with her left leg horribly twisted and breaking underneath her. There, in the tin factory, in the first moment of the atomic age, a human being was crushed by books.

For the rest, the tragedy of Hiroshima is laid out in clean and compassionate English. All the horror is there, in the description of the wounded peoples' macabre procession into the Red Cross Hospital:

Dr. Sasaki worked without method, taking those who were nearest him first, and he noticed soon that the corridor seemed to be getting more and more crowded. . . . Before long, patients lay and crouched on the floors of the wards and the laboratories and all the other rooms, and in the corridors, and on the stairs, and in the front hall, and under the portecochere, and on the front stone steps, and in the driveway and courtyard, and for blocks each way in the streets outside. . . . Dr. Sasaki lost all sense of profession and stopped working as a skilful surgeon and a sympathetic man; he became an automaton, mechanically wiping, daubing, winding, wiping, daubing, winding.

The twenty years which have gone by since that nightmare have been full of the lies and evasions of the official propaganda machines. The allied governments excused Hiroshima on the grounds that there was no other quick way of ending the war. They have never successfully explained why it was necessary to show the bomb's power on a virtually undamaged city, when there were plenty of other places where it could have been demonstrated without killing over a hundred thousand people.

Then they fed us with the deterrent theory, which began with the argument (remember?) that so long as the United States was the only power to have the secret of the Bomb no other country would dare to start a war. The other capitalist powers, however, did not see it in this light; many of them said that the best way to preserve peace was for them also to have the Bomb and so restore the balance of power in the world. And while they have been arguing, and while the disarmament conferences have been droning on, and while the official lies have been flowing out, nuclear weapons have spread and become more powerful. If one of today's hydrogen bombs had been used at Hiroshima, none of Hersey's six people would have lived to tell their stories; they would all have been well inside the first fireball.

The important question now is what effect the establishment of nuclear armaments has had on the world. There is no evidence that the six people of Hiroshima, among the luckiest alive, learned anything from their experiences. The widow, for example, descended into destitution, and placidly accepted it. The office girl relapsed into bewildered despair. The priest had his own consolations:

"If your God is so good and kind, how can he let people suffer like this?" She made a gesture which took in her shrunken leg, the other patients in her room, and Hiroshima as a whole.

"My child, Father Kleinsorge said, "man is not now in the condition God intended. He has fallen from grace through sin."

And of course there were always the delusions of blind patriotism:

"... I never heard anyone cry in disorder, even though they suffered in great agony. They died in silence, with no grudge, setting their teeth to bear it. All for the country!"

This was not unusual. In every city and in every land, in 1945 the war-weary working people could see no reason to abandon their support of the social system which had brought them to atomic warfare. All over the world, capitalism ruled on. Eventually there came the anti-nuclear movement, but that was a protest not against capitalism, nor even against war, but against a particular method of waging war. The nuclear disarmers were no different from the other movements which have protested against capitalism's problems without understanding why they exist.

The atomic bomb was a refinement of the high explosive bombs—like the Grand Slam—which were becoming increasingly cumbersome, because the only way of stepping up their destructive power was to increase their size. High explosive bombs were an extension of the artillery shell, which in turn was a development from small arms fire. The refinement and the increase in the power of armaments is a continuous process, spurred on by, and inseparable from, the ever-present possibility of war.

All the time, the powers of capitalism are in conflict—over the right to exploit the places where they can sell goods and over access to the places where they can find the raw materials to make the goods. Singly or in alliance, they dispute over oil, tin, rubber—which means that they dispute over the Middle East, Malaya, the Congo. They dispute over trade routes and the ports and bases which serve and protect them—which means over Suez, Cyprus, Gibraltar. Here is the basic reason for armed forces, for the arms race and for the build up in weapons which now holds the possibility of a future too terrible to imagine.

It is time now to remember Hiroshima, but not in protest against the Bomb, nor against the men who made it or who dropped it, nor even against the men who sanctioned its use. The only effective protest is against capitalism, against the social order whose conflicts have brought us to the stage where human society can almost wipe itself out. Remember, then, Hiroshima—but not as a beginning nor as an end, only as an incident in a terrible story.

IVAN.

20 years ago

ONE August morning twenty years ago an atom bomb exploded on the town of Hiroshima. It was shortly after 8 o'clock local time that a U.S. bomber dropped the new weapon. An estimated 80,000 people died; and more than that were injured. Together with the attack on Nagasaki a few days later, about six square miles of built up area were completely destroyed. President Truman mentioned the figure of 2,000,000,000 dollars spent on the research and production involved in the manufacture of the bomb.

Despite six bloody years of mechanized slaughter, the devastation resulting from this single raid was on a sufficient scale to penetrate the minds even of those resigned to a world constantly racked by war. Throughout the capitalist press the need for a new morality was preached and, here and there, voices were raised in humanitarian protest.

To consider the protesters first; these generally took the line that the atomic bomb was such a terrible weapon that it should never have been used. But the A-bomb is just as "legitimate" as any other weapon. There is no distinction between methods of warfare which are "acceptable" and others which are not. If the stakes in any capitalist dispute are sufficiently high then every available resource is thrown into the struggle, and pious condemnation of this makes not one iota of difference.

Yet this emotional reaction to nuclear war still finds its adherents in CND and similar organisations. It is based on a refusal to face up to the reality of this capitalist world where brute force is a not inconsiderable factor in securing and maintaining a share in the world's markets. When the permanent bickering over trade periodically flares up into open warfare no power is prepared to fight with one hand voluntarily tied behind its back. Speaking three days after the Hiroshima bombing, Truman's double-talk made quite clear the purpose of the second world war, which culminated in the use of a nuclear weapon:

The U.S. wants no territory or profit or selfish advantage out of this war; we are going to maintain the military bases necessary for the complete protection of our interests and of world peace. (Our emphasis).

However, in August 1945 the bulk of the press was unanimous in its support of the allied bombing but cautioned its readers on the threat involved to mankind. This took the form of sermonising on the "new world" which was to be ushered in with the coming of "peace" and which had to be a world free from the danger of war. The *Daily Express* advised:

Everything turns on the wisdom and goodness of the peoples and their rulers.

The *Daily Telegraph* felt that:

Unless we now so bear ourselves that the power of war-making is stamped out and peace among men of good will is securely established, the human race must go down to ghastly ruin.

The pacifist *Peace News* cried from the heart:

The latent moral crisis of the world has now become evident and palpable. The invention of the atomic bomb imposes upon mankind the necessity of a new behaviour-pattern.

Henceforward, there is only one form of security for Russia or any other great power. That is moral security.

The *Daily Mirror* took refuge in the thought:

Basic power is moral power.

Originality seemed to have gone by the board. The sum total of this wisdom amounts to this: that wars in the past have been the result of the wickedness of men but if mankind now decides to embrace the good, wholesome life than (God willing) we can all live in peace and plenty.

In Britain, amid this deluge of rubbish, Socialists raised their voices in a common sense analysis of the situation. They explained that man is not innately evil and warlike and that, in a world dominated by production for profit, it is the mad scramble for economic advantage that causes war. Conflicts between nations are the result of friction between their rival economies in the struggle to obtain or keep foreign markets and supplies of raw materials, trade routes and

spheres of influence. The decision before mankind of war or peace presents itself as the wider choice between capitalism or socialism.

J. B. S. Haldane, writing on nuclear energy in the *Daily Worker*, had the cheek to declare:

Marxists should be the first to realise that with a complete revolution in war and production the principles of politics will also change. What was right last week may be disastrously wrong this week.

On the contrary, Marxian socialists realise that as long as

capitalism lasts nothing fundamentally changes in the relationship between the property-owning class and the working class; the class struggle continues. The advent of nuclear energy is no reason for socialists to desert their principles. The only effect of nuclear weapons is that the task of the working class—to establish socialism—is now even more urgent. As the *Socialist Standard* pointed out in October, 1945:

"Your choice is as simple as it is vital! On it rests the future of humanity." If this were true in 1945, how much more so these twenty years later?

J.C.

Dimmer than a thousand fools

"Talk softly please. I have been engaged in experiments which suggest that the atom can be artificially disintegrated. If it is true, it is of far greater importance than a war."

Thus spoke Ernest Rutherford to a government defence committee towards the end of 1918. But at that time, Rutherford probably had little inkling of the type of importance his discovery would assume, just where it would lead, and the monstrous use to which it would be put. "The only way I can tell a new idea is really important is the feeling of terror that seizes me," said Professor Franck of Göttingen University about three years later. It was perhaps a more apt remark, and in this case at least, fully justified.

We all have at least some idea of the horrors of the atom bomb and of the hideous refinements it has undergone since 1945. What is often not appreciated is the fairly long and gradual process leading to its production. It was certainly no sudden affair, a point emphasised in Robert Jungk's *Brighter than a Thousand Suns* (Pelican Books 5/-), the third English edition of which appeared last year. He reminds us that much of the important theoretical work took place in the 1920's in Göttingen with a team of scientists of world-wide origin, but such was the lack of interest shown by the capitalist class in something apparently lacking in commercial or military possibilities, that the work was done on a shoe-string budget.

Many of the early scientists regarded their work as "pure"—something quite isolated from politics and the everyday functions of society. "Knowledge for the sake of it" might have been a fair summary of their attitude and indeed, even after Hiroshima had demonstrated

how palpably false such a notion was, Mr. Jungk recalls there were still some who clung to it. For example:

To him, research for nuclear weapons was just pure higher mathematics, untrammelled by blood, poison and destruction. All that, he said, was none of his business. (p. 14.)

Which goes to show how ignorant and muddled even the most brilliant of men can be when they do not relate what they are doing to the world in which they are doing it. This book is described as "a personal history of the atomic scientists" and as such, is a history of personal failure, failure on the part of every one of them to learn and apply the lessons of society.

They protested on many occasions the independence of science and the universal right of free access to all available data, and then stuck their heads back into the sands again. Their sentiments sounded all very desirable, but quite impossible of achievement in a world of private property relationships. And with the rise of Hitler, this lofty idea was watered down. Some of the German physicists fled abroad to Britain or the U.S.A. and supported one ruling class or another in the line up for the war which was not far off.

It is old news how "that great friend of peace" Einstein, was approached in 1939 by some of these very scientists, and with them, urged the U.S. government to produce an atom bomb as quickly as possible. They thought—mistakenly as it turned out—that Nazi Germany was working rapidly towards the same goal, and that it would be essential for America to win this terrible race to ensure that such a weapon would never be used.

"Isn't it wonderful," Goudsmit re-

marked, "that the Germans have no atom bomb? Now we won't have to use ours." The professional soldier's retort shocked Goudsmit, for out of his many years' experience of the military mind, he prophesied: "Of course you understand, Sam, that if we have such a weapon we are going to use it." (p. 158).

In fact, after the collapse of Germany, the "Manhattan Project" was pressed ahead at a furious pace and the Hiroshima Bomb dropped bang on schedule.

Robert Jungk's book is worth reading as a masterly survey of events leading up to Hiroshima and for the ten years which followed. He gives evidence which should leave us in no doubt about two things at least. First, that capitalism will pervert and degrade the finest intentions in the pursuit of its hideous ends. Second, the futility of the "balance of terror" theory and the support of armaments in the hope that they will prevent war. After reading this book it is astounding that such a theory still finds favour.

E.T.C.

BROMLEY CANVASS & MEETINGS

Lewisham Branch intended to hold a canvass on the second (2nd) Sunday of each month at Bromley, meeting at the Bromley Library 10.30 a.m. This is in conjunction with their other activity in this area, this being an outdoor meeting on Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. weather permitting and a literature platform on Saturdays from 2.30 till 4.30 p.m. Both at the Bromley Library.

LITERATURE SALES DRIVES

Will members and sympathisers who are available and willing to sell the "Socialist Standard" at BLACKPOOL—September 27th to October 1st (Labour Party Conference) and BRIGHTON—September 6th to 10th (T.U.C.) please advise the Literature Sales Committee at Head Office. The Committee hopes for a sufficient response to enable them to arrange groups of sellers.

Inflation and prices

PART 2

II. THE INFLUENCE OF GOLD

IN our first instalment, we examined the commodity's value and we discussed two of the reasons for price fluctuations—the forces of supply and demand and the influence of monopoly conditions in supply. The examples were of fluctuations above and below what may be called the normal price and, as we have said, it would simplify matters if we could assume that the normal price is the value and that fluctuations due to supply and demand are variations above and below value.

In actual practice, the normal price is not always the same as value, and probably the great majority of commodities do not normally sell at their value, but at some point above or below it. Marx developed this question of what he called all the same thing as what the manufacturer calls his cost of production. It is arrived at from the labour theory of modifications to his theory and showed that the normal price of commodities in the market is not their value but what he called the price of production. The first thing to notice about this is that the Marxian price of production is not at value, but it takes into account the fact that there is a continuing tendency for the return on invested capital to be equalled in different industries so that if the average rate of profit for example is taken at 10 per cent, the capital invested in the oil industry or in agriculture or in shipping, will all tend to receive something approximating to the same 10 per cent average rate of profit.

The next point is that changes in the value of a commodity can cause changes in its price. The value of a commodity falls, for example, if through inventions and discoveries the amount of socially necessary labour needed for producing it is reduced. In that instance, the value would fall and the price would tend to fall with it. On the other hand, it is possible for the value of a commodity to rise because the amount of socially necessary labour required to produce it increases. This could happen to coal and other minerals. As the richer and more readily accessible seams of coal are exhausted and mines have to go deeper, more labour is required to produce a ton of coal than before, and the value rises, and as the value rises, the price will tend to rise with it. So, to take our example of 24 hours being the amount of socially necessary labour required to produce a bicycle, if it fell to 20 hours or rose to 40 hours, this would cause a fall or a rise in the price of bicycles.

So much for changes in the prices of individual commodities, but what about general changes of all prices? Why was it that in 1921 and 1922 the price level in Great Britain dropped by about a third and why is it that the present price levels are three or four times what they were in 1939? Why were prices rising at the end of the 19th century and in the early 20th century? To explain these movements, we have to come back to our example about the bicycle and the suit of clothes and one ounce of gold, which was by law cut up into four gold sovereigns each weighing about one-quarter ounce.

We have seen that gold has a value like all other commodities. So has silver or lead or brass or aluminium. The value of these and all other commodities are related to the amount of labour needed in their production. Because of this factor common to all commodities, the value of each commodity can be expressed in terms of any other commodity. In fact, historically, because of certain conveniences attaching to gold, the capitalist trading world came to accept gold as the universal equivalent, the money commodity and

all commodities came to have their values expressed in terms of gold. We might imagine that the trading world could have made use of weights of gold and expressed the prices of all commodities in terms of a weight of gold—one-quarter, one-eighth or one-sixteenth of an ounce, etc., but this was obviously not so practical for purposes of internal trade as to have the gold turned into coins of legally fixed weights, although of course the particular weight differed in different countries.

In Great Britain, as already mentioned, gold coins were by law fixed at about one-quarter an ounce of gold. Actually the legal relationship was that one ounce of gold was priced at 77/10½d, but it is simpler to call it about one-quarter ounce per gold sovereign. Under the currency system as it was operated in Great Britain in the 19th century, and similarly in the U.S. with regard to the dollar, the value relationship between commodities in general and gold was preserved by what is called convertibility. Gold coins were in normal circulation alongside Bank of England notes, but there was a legal right at any time for a holder of notes to convert them into gold or to take gold bullion to the Bank of England for conversion into notes or coins. The gold bullion or coins were freely imported or exported.

Under these conditions there could never be any but minor variations between the purchasing power of Bank of England notes and the purchasing power of gold. Now we may ask how in such circumstances was it ever possible for the prices of commodities to undergo a general rise or a general fall. The answer is that, just as the value of commodities of any kind can rise and fall in certain circumstances, because more or less value is required to produce them, the same thing can happen to gold. The value of gold itself can undergo a change. If, for example, methods are devised which produce or refine gold more efficiently, then it is possible for the value of gold to fall, or, conversely, if it becomes more difficult to produce gold, then the value of gold would rise. The only thing to remember about this is that it operates in a sort of inverse direction, that is to say that a fall in the value of gold expresses itself as a rise in the price of all other commodities and vice versa.

Now let us come back to our examples of the bicycle and the ounce of gold. They had equal value because both of them take 24 hours of socially necessary labour for their production, but suppose that the labour required to produce one ounce of gold was reduced from 24 hours to 12 hours. Twenty-four hours of labour would still be required for one bicycle, but 24 hours would now produce two ounces of gold instead of one ounce, so that one bicycle now has the same value as two ounces of gold. Under the requirements of the law in Great Britain, two ounces of gold were still divided into quarter ounces; so the bicycle now would equate with £8 instead of £4. Because the value of gold had fallen to one-half, the gold price of the bicycle would be doubled from £4 to £8, and of course the opposite could happen if the value of gold rose, that is to say, if more labour came to be required to produce one ounce of it than before.

A fall in the value of gold caused by new and more efficient production processes was in fact going on at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century and, in accordance with the explanation already given, it showed itself as a general rise in the prices of other commodities. There is another circumstance in which, even with

continued bottom next page

Finance and Industry

WHAT IS PROFIT?

LAST March the *Daily Worker* had an interview with the Russian economist, Prof. Liberman, whose views on the role of profits in the Russian economy are well known. In the course of the interview Liberman told special correspondent Peter Temple:

Profit is—like money, wages and prices—an essential part of any economy based on commodity production. It's merely an expression of surplus product. If we didn't have any surplus product, then we would be consuming everything we produced and it would be quite impossible for society to develop. Socialist profit is entirely different from capitalist profit, both in its origin and in its designation. In a Socialist society it arises solely from better and more efficient production, producing more goods and services with less expenditure of time, power, raw materials—and that's all. But capitalism extorts profit from exploiting labour, cutting the workers' wages, raising prices to the housewife.

A similar argument was put forward by George Brown when he addressed a meeting of businessmen in Newcastle on May 22. *The Times* on the following day reported his words under the headline PROFIT MOTIVE AS TEST OF EFFICIENCY. Said Brown:

As long ahead as we can see Britain is going to have a mixed economy with a very large private enterprise sector. Therefore the profit motive has a very important role to play. It is time we stopped being silly or doctrinaire on all this. Profits are a very good test of efficiency when earned by enterprising management introducing better methods or new products in competitive conditions. They are not good if they arise out of management using market power to raise prices.

Both Liberman and Brown commend profits that are supposed to come from efficiency and condemn profits that are supposed to come from raising prices. The only difference is that George Brown, unlike Liberman, hasn't the insolence to call his 'good' profits "socialist". In any event both are confused over the nature and source of profits.

In a way, Liberman is right when he says that profit is something to do with the surplus over and above what is consumed. For thousands of years Man has been able to produce more than he needs for bare subsistence but this surplus has been taken by a dominant social class or classes. The means by which this has happened have varied with economic circumstances.

In Ancient Slavery the process was obvious: the slave-masters led a life of ease without working, while the slaves

received their keep. The surplus produced by the slaves over and above their keep belonged to their masters. In Feudal Society the process was obvious too: the serf was required to work so many days a year on the estate of his master. In Capitalist society too the surplus is taken by those who monopolise the means of production, but the process is a little more complicated.

Capitalist production is production for sale—what Liberman refers to as commodity production. In capitalist society everything, including labour power, is bought and sold. In fact capitalism is based on the exclusion of the majority of the population from the means of production. As a result the majority have to sell their working ability for a wage to the capitalists in order to live. On average this wage is about sufficient to maintain the worker in efficient working order.

The capitalist buys labour power for a day or week or a year, as the case may be. For part of this time the worker reproduces his own subsistence; the rest is free labour time, from which profits are derived. Profit arises in the process of production. The capitalist realises his profit when he sells what his workers have produced. In fact the sharing out of the social surplus among the capitalists and their hangers-on is more complicated than this, but the basic fact remains. Profit is taken from the working class in the process of production: this is the form in which the capitalist class take the surplus Liberman talks about. Because they monopolise the means of production the capitalist class are just as able to take this surplus as were the slavemasters and feudal barons.

The hard-headed businessman doesn't see the origin of profit in this way. To him it appears as a surplus over his costs. He knows that if he reduces his costs he has a chance of increasing his surplus. Thus to him it appears that he can make profits by eliminating waste and cutting down costs, in short through efficiency. True, under certain circumstances, he can increase his share of profits in this way just as under other circumstances he can increase it by reducing wages or raising prices. But he deludes himself in seeing here the origin of profit. George Brown shares this delusion. So does Prof. Liberman, when he tries to tell us that in Russia profits arise from efficiency. In fact, of course, profit there as elsewhere arises from the surplus labour of the working class. This Liberman can't—or won't—see, but then he is after all an apologist for the system of exploitation in Russia.

Liberman's views on profit lead him also to a false theory as to the origin of his "capitalist" profit. He suggests that such profit arises from depressing wages and from raising prices. Once again, a particular capitalist may temporarily increase his share of total profit in these ways but the point at issue is not this; it is what is the source of the total profit itself. Under capitalism profit arises even if wages are equal to their value and even if there are no monopoly elements present. Liberman's argument about profits arising from efficiency is a familiar defence of capitalism.

Profit then is a form of theft. In Britain we have many, robbers fighting over their shares in the legalised robbery of the working class. At present there is an argument as to who is entitled to what. George Brown is suggesting that those who get a share through using market power don't deserve it. Enoch Powell, on the other hand, says that every capitalist is entitled to what he can grab. This is no argument in which Socialists can take sides; in our view the entire social product should belong to society as a whole.

Inflation and prices, continued from page 123

a convertible currency, you could have a general rise or general fall in prices. This is when booms and slumps occur. In a boom, every manufacturer is trying to buy raw materials, machinery and so on, with the result that the price of these things would rise and there would be a general rise in prices. In a slump on the other hand, the reverse takes place. Manufacturers and traders in a slump are all trying to sell goods at cut prices in order to get hold of money, and in these circumstances, you could have a more or less general fall in the price level.

(To be continued)

H.

Then profit will disappear for ever and the surplus that arises from the labour of all will be used for the benefit of all.

In Russia there is one grand larcenist; the State. Till now the State has taken the surplus product of the working class more or less directly. Profit in this sense has long existed in Russia; it is not something new, as some discussions of trends in the Russian economy suggest. What is new is the reliance on supply and demand, and on profit on capital investment, to determine what amount should be produced. The market is gradually taking over from State directives. This changeover creates problems.

"SOCIALIST" UNEMPLOYMENT

IN a State-directed economy, such as Russia had for a time, the labour force can be more or less fully used through coercive means such as restrictions on travel or on changing jobs, involving the issue of passes and cards of various sorts. This in fact was what did happen in Russia. Now this has been slightly relaxed, allowing a drift from the country to the towns, creating that chronic capitalist problem, the housing shortage. Thus at the 22nd Party Congress nearly four years ago, Khrushchev admitted:

We still have a housing shortage, the housing problem remains acute. The growth of the urban population in the USSR during the past few years is considerably in excess of estimates.

Another problem which the Khrushchev government had to face was that of large-scale seasonal unemployment on the land. Agriculture in Russia is very backward and very few agricultural workers are paid a steady wage; most in fact are not paid any money at all. In the winter these people are unemployed. Edward Crankshaw of *The Observer*, in a discussion of this problem in the issue of April 4, writes that a campaign to deal with this problem has now been launched.

According to *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, which is sponsoring this campaign, there are now well over 10 million collective farmers unemployed each winter—or over a third of the total number of able-bodied workers on the land—and the number is rising. Nothing was done about this under Khrushchev. Nothing much

has been done yet. But the fact that a newspaper is permitted to campaign for State assistance in the development of local handicraft industries to keep the peasants in winter is very much a sign of the times.

Socialist Profits, and now a Socialist Housing Problem and Socialist Unemployment—what next can we expect from the Workers' Paradise which Russia is supposed to be? The return of our old friends the Soviet Millionaires, perhaps?

THE "PUBLIC MONEY" FRONT

THERE is another example of the ignorance of economics shown by the *Daily Worker*, Russian economics professors and other admirers of Russia, which must be recorded. It is taken from a letter by a leading member of the so-called Communist Party in the South Midlands to a local paper. Apparently he had met a member of the Socialist Party who tried to explain to him that ultimately the burden of taxation fell on the propertied class. This, he wrote,

... is a prize example of the distortion of socialist ideas into nonsense. As if capitalism, under which we live, had not developed a capitalist state! As if that state were not strong, and the buttress of the exploiting employers! As if the state machine did not organise a complex set of attacks which working people have to resist, whether fighting for higher wages, shorter hours, moderate rent, decent pensions or equitable taxes and better government expenditure! The entire future of Oxford, with the Development Plan and the crying need for improved schools and social services, depends on the all-round struggle for the right use of public money.

There is not space to go into this in detail; we only record this as in our view the prize example of the distortion of socialist ideas. It confirms that a correct understanding of political economy is a necessary prerequisite for correct practice. One thing is puzzling though: why only "moderate" rents, why not low rents or for that matter no rent at all? Why only "decent" pensions and "equitable" taxes? Surely "high" pensions and "low" taxes would gather more votes? Marx considered the demand of a fair day's wages for a fair day's work conservative, but this is almost revolutionary compared with some of the demands in the letter. After all, even Gladstone would have favoured "an all-round struggle for the right use of public money".

A.J.B.

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Fallacy of a National Incomes Policy

THE Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson, has confessed that though he dipped into the writings of Karl Marx, he never got anywhere with it. If he had persevered he would have discovered that Marx knew about the problem which Mr. Wilson and his ministers are trying to solve with their Incomes Policy. Not that Mr. Wilson is an innovator in this endeavour, except that some of the descriptive names are different: "wage freeze", "wage restraint", "pay pause", etc., have given place to "planned expansion" and the laying down of "criteria" for price reductions and avoidance of increases, and for keeping wage rises (with certain exceptions) within the rate of annual expansion of production—at present about 3½ per cent.

But before the present hopeful contestant, Mr. George Brown, entered the ring, there were others—Mr. Selwyn Lloyd in 1962, Mr. Thorneycroft in 1957, Mr. MacMillan in 1955. These were all Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer. Earlier still there was the late Sir Stafford Cripps under the Labour government after the war, and both parties, and the Liberals, were sponsors in the War-time National government of the 1944 White Paper on Employment policy, which stated the problem and specified what they hoped were the lines on which it would be solved.

These separate income policies are divided by several years. Governments do not have to worry about a policy for prices and wages when unemployment is considerable.

What then is the problem? In the past 20 years it has come to be known as "Stop-go". Each of the half-dozen Tory Prime Ministers has been chided by the Labour Party with so mismanaging affairs that periods of expansion and low unemployment have regularly been followed by a crisis, by falling or stagnant production, and a rise of unemployment. Each of the governments announced its intention of making expansion continuous and each time the Labour Party said that the government did not know its job and was doing the wrong thing. We are hearing this type of propaganda again now, from the Tories, who failed to control the situation when they were in office.

Marx described the situation briefly and pointedly just 100 years ago in a paper presented to an international Congress in September, 1865:—

Capitalistic production moves through certain periodical cycles. It moves through a state of quiescence, growing animation, prosperity, overtrade, crisis and stagnation (*Value Price and Profit* Chapter XLII).

There were various reactions to Marx's statement; that it wasn't true; that it had happened but would not be allowed to happen again; that it was due to the greed and stupidity of the employers—and all these could be cured. The Labour Party, which first inclined to the view that the periodic crises were the fault of the employers has, since it became the government, veered to its present attitude—that a strong lead from the government to both employers and workers will put things right and keep them there. They are claiming to be able to do now what they and the Tories alike have failed to do and which nobody succeeded in doing in the past. Looking only at the period since the Second World War, annual average unemployment has been as high as 612,000 (1963) and as low as 287,000 (1956), with the monthly figures ranging from under 250,000 to over 900,000. Production has followed a similar course, with bursts of rapid growth followed by decline and periods of stagnation.

The question to be answered is "Why does this happen?" Why does expansion always get checked? Why do booms lead to crises? Basically it is because we live under capitalism, in which the great majority of people can get their living only by selling their mental and physical energies to an employer for wages or salaries. Under this system the propertied class—who live by profit, rent and interest—and the working class, are dependent on the market, on the ability of the owner of the products of industry to sell them at a profit. The mechanism through which all this goes on is that of money and prices.

Capitalism produces nothing directly and freely for the use of those who need it. If you are homeless or near starvation you will not get a house or food; you have to have money to pay for them. The manufacturer who cannot sell what his workers have produced, either because his competitors have produced more cheaply and have captured the market or because the product is no longer wanted (for example, coal being replaced by electricity or oil, or man-made fibres replacing cotton, silk or wool), or because his would-be customers have no money, has to sell at a loss and may end in bankruptcy and his workers join the unemployed.

But, say the "planners", why cannot each line of production be accurately planned ahead so that nothing is produced in excess of the demand for it and nothing is produced for which there will turn out to be little or no demand? This is a deceptive hope. In a boom, when there are prospects of a big unfilled demand, capitalists (including the State industries)—not just in one country but internationally—hasten to expand and modernise their factories to capture as much of the market as they can. They simply have to do this; if they stand still they fall out of the competitive race. In some fields natural conditions defeat the planners anyway. Who can plan good harvests? or foresee and prevent the sudden discovery of vast and easily accessible supplies of oil or natural gas in the Sahara or the North Sea?

In a boom manufacturers are all competing to buy raw materials, machinery, factory buildings—and to hire workers: collectively, they are trying to buy more materials and hire more workers than there are available. In these conditions, sellers—including the workers who are sellers of their labour-power—can put up prices, and do so: which brings us right back to Mr. George Brown and his predecessors, their policies for incomes and prices—and their problems. (Incidentally this is a universal capitalist problem not one in Britain alone. One same issue of the *Times*, April 28th, reported emergency measures including the attempted freezing of prices in Yugoslavia, and the American steel workers and employers arguing about a wage claim in the light of the Federal Government's "Anti-inflationary guiding figure of 3.2 per cent").

What then are the choices before Mr. Brown and other planners? If they let things take their course the boom runs into difficulties; in some fields through scarcities of materials (for example, the recent shortage of bricks) which hold up production, and in others, sooner or later, of overstocking of the market for certain products.

How logical it must look to Mr. Brown to try to prevent the collapse of the boom, by using persuasion and threats to damp down the rise of prices and wages. But is this a practicable policy? In conditions which enable sellers to push up prices and in which workers are favourably placed to push up wages, can government policy prevail? Past experience, the Stafford Cripps era, shows that it may have some

effect for a time. But Wilson and Brown have to remember something else. Capitalism is a class society and the working class do not accept that any particular level of wages or profits is a proper and satisfactory one. Without clearly understanding that they are the producers of all the wealth which the capitalists own, they nevertheless always feel that they have a good case for getting a larger share of it. So before long their resentment turns against the government which is trying to induce them to go slow on wage claims: the national incomes policy of the Labour or Tory government finally breaks on the class nature of capitalism.

All of this Marx understood very well a century ago. It may be said that much of what he saw about the ups and downs of production in the market is now common knowledge among economists, but his insight was greater than theirs. Many of them, including those who toy with the idea of permanent and even expansion, think that expansion, because it is desirable is therefore "normal", and that the interruption of expansion is a fault or failure, due to avoidable mismanagement or to the greed of some group or other. Marx, in his objective analysis of capitalism, viewed it differently. He saw that the expansion, the crisis and the stagnation are all "normal", they are the way capitalism operates because of its own nature. Prices and wages rise in a boom because that is how capitalism with its prices system functions.

Marx did not share one error which is common to all his critics. They think that the problem is one of modern production; he saw that it is a problem of capitalist production—a very different proposition. Did he, because he understood it, have a solution to offer? A solution within capitalism? No! A solution without capitalism? Yes!

If Mr. Brown's policy is bound to run up against the laws and the class nature of capitalism, Marx also saw that the opposite to Mr. Brown's policy offers no way of avoiding a crisis. He dealt specifically with the notion that higher wages would solve the problem of unsaleable goods by enabling the workers to buy more. Apart from other inevitable disharmonies of capitalist production and selling as between the production of the means of production and the production of consumer goods he knew that a general rise of wages at the expense of profits would, while increasing the demand for working class necessities, at the same time reduce the demand for capitalist luxuries, and necessitate a curtailment of their production. He wrote:—

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SOCIAL HARMONY UNDER CAPITALISM

"Nothing can prevent a war throughout Western civilisation between the possessors and the dispossessed—nothing except the dominance in the mass of individuals, or at least in the leaders of both classes, of intelligence and of the ideals of peace and brotherhood . . . If the governing class will keep in touch with all classes; if those in authority in law, in industry, in education, in religion will seek for the public good; if all classes will seek to keep open the means of understanding and sympathy with all other classes, there will be no more need of revolution as a means of social progress than there is of

children's diseases in individual development". (From *The Social Problem* by C. A. Ellwood.)

Neither in the working class nor in the ruling class can the soulful humanitarian ideals upon which he relies become dominant. Out social circumstances destroy them. Present economic conditions sow hate, not love. Figs cannot grow on thistles. If it were necessary to wait for a complete moral regeneration of the working class; if the mass had first to overflow with love and charity for our oppressors, our case as well

It is purely a tautology to say that crises are caused by the scarcity of solvent consumers, or of a paying consumption. The capitalist system does not know any other modes of consumption but a paying one, except that of the pauper or the "thief". If any commodities are unsaleable, it means that no solvent purchasers have been found for them, in other words, consumers (whether commodities are bought in the last instance for production or individual consumption). But if one were to clothe this tautology with a semblance of a profounder justification by saying that the working class receive too small a portion of their own productivity and the evil would be remedied by giving them a larger share of it, or raising their wages, we should reply that crises are precisely always preceded by a period in which wages rise generally and the working class actually get a larger share of the product intended for consumption. From the point of view of the advocates of "simple"(!) common sense, such a period should rather remove a crisis. It seems, then, that capitalist production comprises certain conditions which are independent of good or bad will and permit the working class to enjoy that relative prosperity only momentarily, and that always as a harbinger of a coming crisis. (*Capital* Vol. II. P.475).

Fundamentally crises can happen only because of capitalism, under which the workers' continued employment depends on each part of the productive apparatus (production of means of production, production of necessities and production of luxuries) keeping in line with every other part. As Marx wrote elsewhere:

The lost cause of all real crises always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses as compared with the tendency of capitalist production to develop the productive forces in such a way, that only the absolute power of consumption of the entire society would be their limit. (*Capital* Vol. III. Page 568).

Marx's critics do not believe this. They believe that by some means or other they can keep each industry in line with the others, and with the demand of the market at home and abroad, without over-production in one part of under-production in another, without the production of unsaleable goods, and without disturbance from rises of prices and wages and fluctuation of employment.

They have been trying, without success, for a century or more. Why do they not turn their attention to the way out, that of having Socialism instead of capitalism?

H.

as the Professor's would be utterly hopeless. Fortunately, it is not so. Economic development is with us. On it our essential case rests. The propaganda of revolutionary Socialism is a direct effect of present social conditions. Capitalist conditions indelibly stamp the ruling class with the selfish, cruel and hypercritical qualities of the exploiter; and we know what a little part sentiment plays in the struggle.

(From a review of Professor Ellwood's book in the *Socialist Standard*, August, 1915.)

The maxims of Enoch Powell

"When I see a rich man I give thanks to God".

to Mr. Enoch Powell capitalism is emphatically not a dirty word. To him it describes a social system before whose uncontrollable processes he stands in awe. In competition, the profit motive, "market mechanisms", he sees capitalism as containing all that is morally right, socially beneficial and historically progressive. What Mr. Powell deplores above all is any attempt on the part of the state machine to interfere with the economic forces of capitalism. Society should never question what capitalism itself represents as economic necessity, for in its infinite wisdom capitalism knows what is best for humanity.

An example of the kind of government action that Mr. Powell deprecates is the attempt to arrest the movement of the labour force from areas of industrial decline to areas of industrial growth by imposing regional development. Also, he sees the intervention of the state in maintaining uneconomic services on, say, the railways as harmful. The law of economic viability ought to be allowed to run its course. The North-East of England and unprofitable railways should be discarded, for what is dead should be buried. Only what is commercially advantageous is socially best.

Another area of industrial life where Mr. Powell feels the state has no good cause to show its face is in wage bargaining between employers and workers. Here again, he says, the "free play of the market" is the best deciding factor; Mr. Powell mocks the attempts of the government to "plan" incomes as much as he attacks their attempts to plan economic growth. He thinks that Government action in these fields is only likely to frustrate the freedom of people to do what is best for themselves.

Mr. Powell has never carried his ideas to the point where he has refused to serve in governments that have attempted intervention in these various fields. He was part of the government that sent Mr. Quintin Hogg (complete with cloth cap) on a tour of the North-East as part of an attempt to formulate a plan for revived industry in that area. It was the same government that set up Nicky, Neddy and at least paid lip-service to the idea of an "incomes policy". During this time, Mr. Powell held ministerial rank and was part of the Cabinet.

The case of Mr. Powell presents a curious and unashamed throwback to the ideas of early 19th century *laissez faire* capitalism. In fact, since the 19th century, the state machine has continued to grow and expand its field of influence through all branches of social and economic life including welfare and pensions, defence, nationalised industries, civil service, treasury, the law, housing, education, transport, science and technology, etc.

Mr. Powell has said that the disadvantage of the state is that it is not directly involved in competitive profit-making and is therefore "devoid of the incentives which tend to sharpen people's minds in a competitive situation about what might be the right and what might be the wrong course". It is this very detached position of the government's which allows it to view and act upon what it calls the collective "national interest", plus, of course, the interests of itself as a political party in power. Part of the function of the state has been to try to mitigate some of the more savage effects of capitalism's jungle laws, by the distribution of doles to the unemployed, subsidised housing, for example.

The intervention of the state in economic affairs, such as

nationalisation, rent control, agricultural subsidies, etc., do not compromise the nature of capitalism; they are attempts by the government to facilitate its smooth running.

The tendency in capitalist society is quite the reverse of what Mr. Powell would like to see. Far from diminishing its influence, the state machine expands and becomes more complex. It is doubtful whether Mr. Powell's views can ever have a practical place in the policies of a future Tory government.

One effect that Mr. Powell's views do have at the present time is to help to preserve within the Tory Party its conservative identity and pander to traditional prejudices such as distrust of bureaucracy and the mythical virtue of conservative freedom. In practice, Tory governments of necessity administer capitalism in much the same way as Labour governments. The policies they carry out are prescribed for them not by political principle, but in the main by the economic dictates of the situation in which they find themselves.

In spite of the fact that when they are faced with the realities of government the spurious differences between the Labour and Tory Parties tend to evaporate, as separate organisations they require the front of a separate identity. It is men like Mr. Powell who in the Tory Party help to provide the image of traditional conservatism. Whatever the actual policies of Tory governments in power, his views cater to the emotional requirements and sentiments of Tory Party membership.

Similarly in the Labour Party, the function of a politician like Mr. Michael Foot is that in spite of what the Labour government has done since it took office, the views of Michael Foot tend to create the impression of a "radical left-wing" party who are guardians of working-class interests. This is inspiring to Labour Party workers and helps to provide cohesion within the organisation.

Mr. Powell has said, "When I see a rich man I give thanks to God. What do I feel when I see a poor man? It is that he would be poorer still if there were not the opportunity and the national incentive to people to succeed, to become rich, to make profit". What, in fact, Mr. Powell is advocating is complete subservience to the economic tyrannies of capitalist society, and more than that, all the class privileges and under privileges that it implies.

Mr. Powell accepts the criteria of profit, commercial advantage, and the opportunities for sale provided by "market mechanisms" as the best motivating force behind the provision of community requirements. In fact, nothing could be more remote from the realities of life under capitalism.

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In practice, the private ownership of wealth, commerce, and the profit motive prevent society's free use of its productive techniques and ensure that a vast proportion of social labour is inefficiently applied to functions that have nothing to do with meeting human needs. The profit motive is not something that facilitates the widest possible distribution of wealth, but is in itself an economic barrier against the application of man's accumulated knowledge and techniques in production. An example of this can be found in "National defence", which Mr. Powell concedes is the proper concern of the state. The need for "National defence" arises from the situation where the modern nation states, Britain, France, America, Russia, etc., are competitors over markets, trade routes, sources of raw materials, spheres of national influence, etc. In order to maintain security in a competitive world, governments must maintain standing armies, navies and air forces; they must divert research and technology into the improvement of means of destruction such as nuclear weapons. The government must maintain an armaments industry and ensure housing, food, clothing, transport, etc., for all the personnel involved.

Measured against these facts of everyday life, Mr. Powell's maxim that competition stimulates production is true only within extremely narrow limits. In practice, economic rivalry carries with it the burden of a vast appendage of wasteful functions which from the point of view of real material needs are utterly useless. Competition and economic rivalry both within nations and between nations generate fear, insecurity and enduring frustration, and result in hatred and violence. The fact of workers being in competition within a nation over jobs, housing, etc., can provide the seedbed of enmity and race prejudice. Between nations, it is not merely that economic rivalry results in all the material wastefulness that is involved in war, but it also causes the destruction of

human life itself. The Americans and Vietnamese who are killing each other now are doing so against a background of all that Mr. Powell eulogises as competition and economic rivalry. The effort that capitalist society puts into war and the preparations for war is only one aspect of the material waste and human misery that results directly from production for profit.

The profit motive is not a liberating factor in production but one that stultifies production. The profit motive sets the limitations on what is possible in production and distribution. Against this end, the real material needs of the community take second place. Man under capitalism provides food, housing, clothing, health services, education, etc., within a tight economic framework conditioned by the prior requirements of profit. It is against this background that the enduring problems of society such as housing shortages, ugly urban environments and the fact that two-thirds of the world's population do not get enough to eat must be understood.

Mr. Powell has talked a good deal about freedom, but the kind of freedom he seeks to maintain is the freedom of *entrepreneurs* to wield an arbitrary power in pursuit of their narrow private property interests in the most fundamental of human activities—the production and distribution of wealth. Socialists also want freedom, but freedom of the whole community to deploy its productive resources and all the talents and skills of the working class—be they scientists, professional workers, craftsmen, technologists of whatever—in the long overdue work of solving our problems. But Socialism involves more than the possibility of material comfort. Above all, Socialist freedom is the freedom of the individual emancipated from his working-class status and all the indignities of economic servitude and exploitation that Mr. Powell finds so worthy of approval.

P.L.

LETTER: THE CAUSES OF RACE PREJUDICE

Is this madness or do my eyes deceive me? "The root cause of modern race prejudice is the capitalist system of society."

No one has ever been able to isolate the cause of race-prejudice and I doubt if anyone ever will. It seems that as it is "in the blood" the only thing one can do is to sublimate it and keep it in the background. Certainly it is absurd to catch on to such a silly reason for it as the one suggested above; race-prejudice might just as well be caused by famine or butterflies.

If the Socialist movement is to progress it can only do so by good sense and not by propagating nonsense: perhaps it could do well by reverting to its original Christian basis although as I see it Christianity and Socialism have reached such staggering dimensions in words that any good within them has long since been dissipated. The time is now ripe for a new system particularly now that the international state is looming large upon the horizon and clarity of thought and objects is essential.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN S. CRAIG, B.A.

REPLY

If race prejudice is "in the blood", why does it vary in its form with the time and place at which it appears? Why does it now exist in one country and not another? Why is it now principally a matter of people of European origin discriminating against those from other continents and not the other way round? The only logical answer to these questions—and to many others—is that race prejudice is not an idea inborn in human beings—it is not "in the blood"—but it has a social basis and can be explained only by reference to that basis.

Modern race prejudice flourishes because capitalism produces chronic problems in employment, housing and welfare. The working class suffer these problems but they do not understand their cause. They are, therefore, ready to blame the problems onto any fashionable scapegoat, including foreigners or Negroes or any other group which happens to be a readily identifiable minority.

Far from finding its origins in Christianity, Socialism is completely hostile to it, and to all other religions. It is typical that the very organisation which has so often claimed that the two are inseparable—the Labour Party—should now be doing so much to pander to race prejudice in this country.

The so-called international state is an old idea, one of many delusions used in an attempt to divert working class discontent. Any move towards an effective international organisation of capitalism has always come to grief on the system's conflicting interests.

The time is indeed ripe for a new social system, and this is what socialists advocate. The only people who are immune from racial prejudice are those who have realised where the interests of the world working class lie—in a system of society based on the common ownership of the means of wealth production, and in which all men will stand equally without distinction of race or sex.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

The passing show

Letters to the Editor

I once wrote a letter to a sports magazine criticising an article which appeared in the previous issue. To butter up the editor and to try to ensure publication, my opening words were:—"I think your magazine is the best bobsworth on the market" and when I turned expectantly to the correspondence columns the next week, there was my letter—minus everything except the first sentence.

It is what they call editing, in theory to tidy up the prose, but in practice—at least with the raggier papers like *The Daily Mirror*—to mutilate the letters and publish perhaps a line or two only from those selected for publication, to suit the editorial policy. Just take a glance any time at the "Viewpoint" section in *The Mirror* and you'll see what I mean. Some of the letters are so short, it would be difficult to write less and say anything at all and the parts that the editor chooses to allow are often puerile and inconsequential.

But that's the *Mirror*. Certainly other papers, such as *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* are not so restrictive and many of the letters you will find in their correspondence columns are several column inches long. Which is as well, for in addition to making the whole thing more interesting, it encourages expressions of opinion from all sorts of people including prominent Labourites and Tories. Here, for instance, in *The Telegraph* of July 8th, is Conservative A. P. Costain trying to explain away his party's failure to solve the housing problem in their thirteen years of office. He blames it on to "increased population and higher living standards"—not really a very novel excuse. And side by side with him are Labourites Frank Allaun and Stanley Orme proclaiming the right to strike but conveniently forgetting how tough their government gets with strikers whenever it gets the chance.

But perhaps the most intriguing contribution comes from a Mr. Raymond V. McNally, who extols the virtues of inequality and pronounces this dreary doctrine with a Bumble-like pomposity. "Of course, absolute equality and prosperity for all are impossible of realisation", he writes,

But it is possible, as Britain has demonstrated, to level all classes to the same approximate standard by deliberate redistribution of wealth.

Now I'm glad he said *approximate*. At least that gives him some sort of getout, because he gives no data to support his claims and with ten per cent of the population owning ninety per cent of the accumulated wealth after all the years of alleged levelling (official figures, not ours) the process must indeed be very approximate. And like other confessed supporters of capitalism, he holds the United States up as a guide and mentor for us all; even the scandalous waste which has horrified Vance Packard and Thorstein Veblen, he does not think at all amiss. It's all part of a "dynamic economy" and the general scheme of things, apparently:

Indeed everything in nature has its aim and purpose, whether it concerns man, plants or the stars; inequality and suffering play an important part in the general evolution.

Under which heading we can of course group such horrors at Vietnam, the Congo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and we can show at the same time, the lengths to which some people go to justify their support of a vicious and inhuman setup. Actually on closer inspection, it's little more than the old "human nature" argument dressed up in fancy phraseology, and which we encounter at least once in every meeting.

There were probably replies from other readers to this and other letters appearing on that day and we may be sure that the controversy waxed furious—and spurious. For interesting though it may be, it will all have a basic assumption—the acceptance of capitalism. You will not often see a letter from a Socialist because it would not be of sufficient "general interest" and after all, the editor has his circulation figures to keep in mind. Yes, it's interesting to read the correspondence columns but they will really come alive when the Socialist movement grows and controversy about an entirely new world starts to show itself.

Off the Ball and Chain

Estartit is on the Costa Brava. It has the Mediterranean sea, lots of sunshine and six miles of glorious sands. It caters overwhelmingly for the English Tourist ("just not Spanish enough for me" said

one pretentious female) and they pour into the area throughout the holiday season, swimming, sunbathing and sometimes upsetting their stomachs with too much Spanish food.

Under the influence of the warm climate, it is interesting to watch people's reactions. There are some who never forget they are British and wear a collar and tie even on the hottest days, and then there are those who try to be madly, gaily, Spanish and wear the largest sombreros they can find. But for most of them, it is a time to relax and forget their wage earner's status for a week or two. And just for those few days, briefly, their guard is down and they can talk to complete strangers in a happy and friendly manner. It is so enlightening to see it all, but surely some of them must ask themselves the obvious question: "Why can't we be always like this?"

It's a fair enough question too, because the comparison with everyday working life is so stark that even the non-Socialist must be painfully aware of it. But although that may be so, he cannot explain it; no doubt he dislikes working for wages but he has no idea what to do about it (except perhaps dream of winning the pools) and it's certain he does not realise how far reaching are the effects of wage slavery.

For this wage workers' world is drab and insecure, but more than that, laden with resentment and suspicion, part indeed of a whole world of resentment and suspicion that is capitalism. Even his next door neighbour he is reluctant to really trust, and as for his workmate—a prospective competitor—that's often worse. Life for most workers is certainly no holiday.

But it would be different in a Socialist world. By that I don't mean we would spend all our time lying on the sand getting fried like a lump of rock salmon. What I do mean is that given a world of common ownership, work would be everyone's ambition—a way of self expression that the present system just cannot provide. Freed from the strains of competition and the cash nexus, we could meet people from far and wide on truly equal and friendly terms, because the cause of suspicion and fear would no longer exist. That refreshment and recuperation we seek so desperately today in our yearly break, Cotswolds or Costa Brava, would be there every day of the week in the work we do and the useful, beautiful things we would produce.

E.T.C.

Quick look around

To those who find the headlines depressing, and who prefer to look for the news in the newspapers' smaller columns ("Vicar, 73, Weds Secretary, 21") we can offer little comfort.

Events which are considered of minor importance reflect the same drab image as the big news.

Nearly two million people are receiving National Assistance in this country, which shows that many more than two million are not sharing in whatever the Tories meant when they talked about our rising prosperity. About three quarters of those on National Assistance are pensioners, which shows again that although the shadow of want may have been lifted from some people (for example the judges who are soon going to get a

twenty-five per cent rise in their already big wages) it still hangs over the retired worker.

We have been promised that the report of the government's Study Group on the North West will shortly be published. The Group found that parts of the North West have the highest mortality rate in the country, due to the fact that so many of its people live in towns and cities, under squalid conditions. It also discovered a fact which some other people had known for a long time; that there are still plenty of slums in this country, and that they are increasing fast. The Group concluded, in fact, that it will take fifty years, at the present rates of clearance, to get rid of the North West's slums.

Vietnam mission

It is fairly safe to assume that Mr. Wilson was not heedless of the political advantages to be gained from the publicity which was bound to accompany the suggested peace mission on Vietnam.

Perhaps it was even hoped that in the excitement few people would have realised that the mission had not actually done anything, or gone anywhere and that indeed most of its members had split up and gone home.

The mission was the same sort of empty gesture—like Chamberlain's trip to Munich, like the Locarno Treaty in 1924—which convince workers that capitalism's leaders are about to solve the problem of war.

This conviction rests upon a delusion; that wars are caused by international statesmen omitting to talk before they start shooting—or rather, before they tell their workers to start shooting for them. (At one time there was a popular

theory that Stalin's intransigence could be dealt with by getting him to raise a Kremlin cricket team to play an XI from Westminster.)

In fact, there is no lack of opportunity for capitalism's leaders to confer. And, as the Vietnam mission has shown, there are also plenty of informal channels through which they can communicate, even if they do not recognise each other's existence. It is clear that they fail to do so only when they think there are other ways of settling their differences.

It is also clear that wars are not caused by a failure of communication. They are caused by conditions which cannot be affected by any conference, and they start when further talking is pointless.

The Western powers are now trying to get the Vietcong to negotiate, when they are convinced that they are close to victory. This is something like Hitler trying to impose his terms on the Allies

In Geneva, United Nations Secretary General U Thant said that on present showing there will be more unemployment, more hunger, more malnutrition, in 1970 than there is today. "The misery of the developing world," he said, "is a progressive misery. It threatens to grow worse in the second half of the decade." The only comment to make here is that this gloomy opinion comes from someone who, with the job which he has, must obviously be one of the world's top optimists.

There is no reason to hope that the news will get any better. It is apparent that there was something seriously lacking in the perceptive powers of the man who first said that every day, in every way, things are getting better and better.

as his empire was collapsing in April 1945. Like any other war, the one in Vietnam has its own momentum of ruthlessness and it will be played out to its bitter end.

That will not be the end of the matter; Vietnam is only the latest of the small wars in the greater struggle between the world powers over which shall control and exploit South East Asia. There is no sense, no reason, no humanity, in such conflicts—and no "right" either on any side.

It is typical of Labour Party hypocrisy that they should pretend that normal human standards can be applied to the war in Vietnam. They are among the supporters of the social system which produces the war there and which could make it (to use the current ugly jargon) escalate into something which even Mr. Wilson does not pretend to be able to control.

Algerian conflict

During the long war for Algerian independence, the people who suffered in the nationalist cause were comforted by the thought that out of their tribulations freedom would be born in Algeria.

At that time, as the French forces were daily committing the most brutal of excesses, it was easy to represent the FLN as fighters for liberty.

One of the heroes of the rebellion, who quickly emerged as the effective ruler of Algeria after independence, was Ben Bella. He was supposed to be the man who, once the French had been banished, would lead the poor Algerian peasant to freedom and prosperity.

One of Ben Bella's closest associates, the man who stood by him and did so

much to help him root out opposition after the rebellion, was Colonel Boumedienne. If anyone bears a load of responsibility for selling Ben Bella as Freedom's Messiah, it is Boumedienne.

Yet now, according to the Colonel, the whole thing was a mistake. Ben Bella does not stand for freedom—he is a despot, a demagogue. He squandered

NEWS IN REVIEW continued

Algeria's resources, he frightened off investors. (We should remind ourselves here that the Colonel, who has pledged himself to encourage investment in Algeria, calls himself a Socialist.)

It is too late, now, to discover that the Algerian rebellion was to result in replacing one despotism by another; it would have saved some lives if at the time Boumedienne had reminded his followers that nationalist risings often

have that effect.

All nationalist movements claim that they are fighting for freedom, and not a few of them also claim to be Socialist as well. But when they get power, and the moment of truth arrives, they frequently impose dictatorships.

Algeria is only the latest of several countries in which this has happened recently, and in which the leaders of the

rebellion, after they have won, have split and denounced each other as despots. In one after another of the new African states this has happened—sometimes until the imposition of a one-party state has silenced the opposition and left only one side to put over its point of view.

These are the fruits of nationalist rebellion. There can be few causes which have induced so many people to waste so much time, energy and blood.

Gaolbreak

One fact is often overlooked by the man-in-the-street advocate of the deterrent effect of heavy sentences. The more severe the sentence, the greater the incentive to escape.

Heavy sentences are often imposed on members of big and well-organised mobs like the Train Robbers, who are well enough equipped, in daring and organisation, to bring off a rescue from gaol.

The prison authorities are of course aware of this; if rumours are true they have thwarted plans to free two of the Train gang. But the criminals have the same sort of advantages as guerilla fighters—they can move freely in the world outside, they can watch and wait and pounce when they think the moment has come.

The rescue of Ronald Biggs has confirmed what the escape of Charles Wilson showed—that big time crime is now refined and organised enough not to reject any job. Perhaps some criminals with a sense of humour might reflect that they at any rate are responding to the Labour government's appeal for greater technical expertise in our work.

It has been often said that men like the Great Train Robbers would make excellent soldiers or big business men. It is apparent that they do have the required amount of ruthlessness to succeed in these fields.

At the moment, however, they prefer to rob people in ways which capitalism says are illegal, and to ignore other

methods which are likely to bring them a place in the Honours List.

One thing the robbers fear above everything else, above imprisonment, above the nervous stress of their work, and that is to be a normal member of the working class. They cannot face the prospect of the daily journey to the factory or office, the clocking on and off, the monotonous routine jobs, the kowtowing to the boss, the leisure time spent in visiting or cutting the lawn.

This is one of the influences which persuade them to be criminals. It is also one of the influences which persuade the capitalist class to hang on to their privileged situation, and to the rights it brings them to be legalised robbers.

MEETINGS

KIDDERMINSTER

The Station Inn, Farfield
Wednesday, August 11th, 7.30 pm

DISCUSSION

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

OXFORD

Martyrs Memorial, St Giles
Sundays August 1st, 15th, 29th
at 8 pm

STEVENAGE

Clock Town Square, New Town
Saturdays, August 7th and 21st, 3 pm

BRIGHTON

The Fishmarket
Sundays, 3 pm

LONDON

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 and 6 pm
East Street, Walworth
August 1st (1 pm)
August 8th, 15th, 29th (11 am)
August 22nd (noon)
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 8 pm

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm
Earls Court (Aug 2nd and 16th) 8 pm

Wednesdays

Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers Street) 8 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm
Earls Court, 8 pm
Bromley Library, 8.30 pm

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WHAT? RUNS THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

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BLOOMSBURY 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (2nd and 16th Sept.) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 3rd Sept. at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath and 17th Sept. at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottlingham, SE9. Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 7.30 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 37 Beltane Street, Glasgow, C3.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KENSINGTON Fridays 8 pm, 55 Meadvale Road, Ealing, W5. (temporarily). Correspondence: R. Cain, 35 Waltham Road, Southall, Middlesex.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Neslon, above address.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson, Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

KIDDERMINSTER Enquiries: J. Amos, 31 Sion Hill, Broadwaters. Meets 2nd Wednesday in month at 7.30 pm, Station Inn, Farfield, Comberton Road, Kidderminster.

Contacts

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

MID HERTS Meets 1st Monday in month at The Red Lion, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel: Hatfield 4802.

NOTTINGHAM 1st Sunday in month (5th Sept.) at 2.30 pm in the Committee Room, Co-operative Hall, Heathcoat Street, Nottingham. Enquiries: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive, Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesdays 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX Thursdays (2nd and 16th Sept.) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (13th and 27th Sept.) 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowd, Llansyfelach, Swansea.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (9th and 23rd Sept.) in month, 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (10th and 24th Sept.) in month, 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Elham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Meets last Friday in month at 7.30 pm, The International Centre, George Street. Enquiries: A. Atkinson, 4 St. Martins Road, Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale, Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

SUNDERLAND Enquiries P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham. Meets 1st Sunday in month, 8 pm, Crown & Thistle, High St., W.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

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WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

What runs the Labour Government?

If anyone argues that this is impractical, we do not doubt that Mr. Wilson could tell them much about the alleged practicalities of Capitalism!

It is almost a year now since the Labour party formed a government. They felt that thirteen wasted years of Tory rule would give way to an administration that could solve social problems. It has been a year of renewed failure, in which their optimism has been humiliated by their inability to control Capitalism.

We do not doubt that the Labour Government really believed they could "get the economy moving". There was to be steady expansion. Out of a four per cent increase in productivity there were going to be more schools, hospitals, roads, pensions. There were going to be more wages. A "planned" incomes policy. A "planned" growth rate. None of these schemes have begun to get off the ground, nor do they show any prospect of doing so.

We do not doubt that the Labour Government is serious when it implores the country to "pull its weight in the national interest". The inane weakness of appeals to community spirit in a money grabbing, competitive society escapes them.

Mr. Wilson no doubt thinks of himself as an architect of social progress but in practice he imposes credit squeezes. In the reality of Capitalism his burdening problem is "to devalue the pound or not to devalue the pound?" This is the pathetic plight of a politician who claimed to have practical solutions.

No doubt members of the Labour Government are free from race prejudice yet they have legislated against the immigration of West Indian and Pakistani workers. Under Labour Government management, economic frustrations may well be creating more acute racial tensions.

In his role of peacemaker, no doubt Mr. Wilson is sincere. As head of the Commonwealth mission he felt that his wise counsels might prevail in Vietnam. Some months later we have almost forgotten about the peace mission, but the fighting continues.

The debate between Socialists and reformers goes on. They claim that as a Government they can control Capitalism. They argue that through a process of reform they can direct its affairs in the interests of the whole community. The sorry spectacle of the Labour Government today underlines how tragically wrong they have been.

Regardless of the party in power, capitalism asserts its demand for profit. Whatever principles governments claim to have, their policies will be mainly prescribed by the economic situation they find themselves in. Capitalism humbles the most aspiring idealist into subservience to private property interests. Mr. Wilson confesses this subservience when he insists that above all "we" must be economically viable.

The Labour Government is concerned with credit squeezes, inflation, the trade gap, low gold reserves, high prices, wage demands, "restrictive" practices, productivity. All this does nothing for the real needs of the community.

We say that man can democratically control his social affairs, but first he must establish Socialism. The means and techniques of wealth production must first be held in common by the whole community instead of privately by a minority class. Production must be geared to meet human needs instead of the pursuit of profit. The working class must emancipate itself from economic exploitation. As free members of a community based on social equality, their skills and talents must be released from the undignified limitations that arise from wage employment.

Double-think on disarmament

MOST of the people who have read George Orwell's gloomy novel *Nineteen Eighty Four* have probably assumed that it was a warning of things to come. Perhaps that is what Orwell intended. Yet he must have been aware that much of what he wrote was not prophecy; it was happening at the time, and it is happening still.

One outstanding feature of Big Brother's dictatorship was the way in which words were distorted until they came to mean their opposite. The Ministry of Truth propagated lies. The three principles of Ingsoc were: War Is Peace; Freedom Is Slavery; Ignorance Is Strength. This is so blatant that there was no need for Orwell to be at all elaborate in attacking it. Yet the same sort of distortion happens today and nobody considers it worth debunking in a best selling novel.

Consider the word disarmament. The meaning is clear enough. It is a word in constant use by all sorts of governments to describe a distant ideal which, they say, they are aiming for and which they would attain if it were not for the obstacles being put in their way by other governments. Political leaders often announce, with the air of men revealing a fundamental secret, that what is needed is a *disarmament* conference, but nobody else is interested in attending one. Sometimes the nations actually get around the conference table and the reporters tell us they are talking about disarmament.

All of this convinces the sort of people who would be deceived by Big Brother that there is a chance of the rival states of capitalism discarding their armaments. But despite all the talk and the promises, and despite the frequent use of the word, no country ever gets to the point of actually disarming. Indeed, the very governments who claim to have an interest in the matter go for the most powerful weapons in the world, which is more or less the same as saying that War is Peace.

A recent example of this has been provided by the Labour Government who, as we all know, have not got a department actually called the Ministry of Truth. The programme on which the Labour Party fought the last election said:

First and foremost will come our initiative in the field of disarmament. We are convinced that the time is opportune for a new break-through in the disarmament negotiations . . .

We shall appoint a Minister in the Foreign Office with special responsibility for disarmament . . .

Now it is Mr. Wilson's proud boast that his Government are keeping the promises they made last October and sure enough he did appoint a Minister of Disarmament. This man was one of Mr. Wilson's little surprises—a journalist who, given a life peerage, was tucked away into his corner at Whitehall and left, in the words of Labour's manifesto, " . . . To stop the spread of nuclear weapons . . . achieve controlled reductions in manpower and arms . . . stop the private sale of arms . . ."—which nobody can say is an unambitious programme.

This, then, was Labour's way of taking the initiative on disarmament. Unfortunately, it soon became clear that matters were not so simple. The new Government announced that, even after making several reductions, they were still going to spend more on armaments than ever before in peace time. A few months later they showed how anxious they were that other countries should follow this example: they appointed a "super salesman" to sell British-made arms abroad—and salesmen, of course, thrive on their customers'

increased expenditure.

In this, the Labour Government acted with the same speed as in the appointment of Lord Chalfont. It soon became known that the job had been accepted by Sir Donald Stokes, the managing director of Leyland's, a firm already well entrenched in the weapons trade. There was no doubt that the Government were as solidly behind Sir Donald, in his efforts to persuade countries not to disarm, as they were supposed to be behind Lord Chalfont in his efforts to do the opposite. The super salesman was pleased to tell us:

They are giving me a big staff, all the staff I need, and I have been promised assistance and co-operation from Government level downwards.

Sir Donald did not speculate on what would happen if everywhere his staff went they were turned away by governments who had been under the misapprehension that the Labour Government wanted them to disarm. (There was, of course, no need for him to speculate on the opposite; everyone knows what happens when the weapons salesmen are busily successful.) Neither did he mention that Mr. Wilson, who often attacks trade union rules which keep two men doing a job which could be done by one, has gone one better than the unions by creating two jobs which in theory cancel each other out.

In fact, the Government's mind is anything but confused. Disarmament is so remote a possibility that it can be ignored, or at best treated derisively. But for political reasons some sort of a gesture must be made. There is nothing original in Labour's actions, other than the fact that they have appointed a Minister. And what is that worth? Lord Chalfont may not actually get to the bonfire, but he is no more than a dummy, a November guy dressed up to attract the voters' pennies. The real world of capitalism, with its rival economies and its disputes, is more correctly represented by Sir Donald Stokes.

Weapons, just like all other wealth produced under capitalism, are commodities. The need or fancy which, in their own unique way, they satisfy, spring from the wars which capitalism inevitably produces. The companies which make armaments hope to make profits from them. Sometimes they fail; sometimes—like Ferranti's and the Bloodhound—they succeed.

The arms market, like those for other commodities, is often affected by government policies. The Western Powers have a strict embargo on exports to China; the Labour Government have prevented sales to South Africa. The armaments companies naturally do not like this interference and sometimes, as a recent biography of Basil Zaharoff made clear, they manage to sell their wares to enemy countries in defiance of their governments' wishes.

In other cases, governments actively help their armaments firms to produce and to sell their goods. Up to now British firms have been left largely to their own resources in the export markets. They had to wait for the export-driving Labour Government to give them the extra push to go out and prove to the world that British weapons knock down, blow up, sink, bomb or simply kill, better than any others. The reason for this support is that the Government feel the British industry is being deprived of its slice of a very rich cake.

The entire arms export market between now and 1967 may be worth £1,500 million, a lot of it in Europe. The American

industry is already bidding strongly, with their own super-salesman and a big and energetic staff. One of their current projects is to persuade NATO to take American weapons as their standard equipment, which would be a bitter blow to the British weapon makers. This high pressure selling has provoked Mr. Wilson to complain, and to organise his own bunch of salesmen to operate at a similarly high pressure under Sir Donald Stokes. This is probably very welcome to the armaments firms over here—as Robert Heller commented in *The Observer*: " . . . it's not often you get the free services of somebody else's super-salesman." But it can be reconciled with Labour's professed interest in disarmament only by the same mental processes as justify the Big Brother slogan of Freedom Is Slavery.

The Government may well argue that they are not the only hypocrites. Every state pays lip service to disarmament, even while they are arming to the teeth. The French Government celebrated this year's Bastille Day with a display of nuclear weapons and other military delicacies which have absolutely no connection with Liberty, Equality or Fraternity. The Soviet Government recently took the initiative in recalling the Geneva Disarmament Conference, but before anyone starts to cheer this as an example of the Kremlin's interest in disarmament they should remember that the Russians share the responsibility for the same conference breaking down last September. It is apparent that other motives lie behind the reopening of the talks.

Nuclear weapons are not simple. Contrary to popular belief, they cannot be made and fired by a solitary madman out of a science fiction paper-back. They are the products of a developed industry, backed by considerable technical knowledge. At one time, only the most advanced countries could hope to have nuclear weapons, but now the situation has changed. At the moment five countries have the Bomb and, according to Lord Chalfont, there are about a dozen others with the knowledge to make it; within the next 15 years the number of nuclear powers may more than double.

This is one of the current problems of the big power blocs: they call it the "proliferation" (Orwell would have been proud of that word) of nuclear weapons. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union wants to see the present military power balance disturbed by the rise of other nuclear powers. China is only one of those which could become a dominant menace by the development, and perhaps the use, of a fashionably powerful nuclear weapon. The West German Government, while protesting its own intention not to make the Bomb, is trying to use this act of self-denial to add weight to its campaign for the reunification of Germany. How far is Bonn prepared to go in this explosive dispute? The Russian and American ruling classes clearly have a common interest in trying to control these threats: if the Bomb has to be used, they want to see that it is with their consent.

What the Geneva Conference is actually doing in talking about a treaty to prevent non-nuclear powers becoming nuclear, is trying to control and reverse a process which the nuclear powers themselves began when they first made their Bomb. Russia and Britain did not regard "proliferation" as a problem as long as they were among the non-nuclear powers; they were working hard to spread atomic weapons in their direction. But as soon as they mastered the Bomb they became interested in restricting the number of nuclear powers. Their claim to be interested in disarmament is worth no more than the title of Ministry of Peace, given by Orwell

to the department which waged perpetual warfare.

If disarmament conferences are complicated affairs this is not a symptom of the tangled interests and the involved disputes which are capitalism. The conference cannot succeed because capitalism is always at war. One of the latest to testify to this is Lord Watkinson, who used to be a Conservative Minister and who is now the chairman of the British National Council's committee for exports to the United States. This is what he said on July 13th last:

The situation facing Britain at present can be summed up as "export or bust" . . . The Government must be convinced that, whereas war is a possible occurrence, the trading battle goes on the whole time.

It is impossible to imagine the sort of world which Lord Watkinson described laying down its arms. The perpetual trading battles of capitalism breed its wars, and so make armaments necessary. The capitalist powers talk about disarmament but this is only another example of words being distorted to accommodate a blatant hypocrisy. The fact of the matter is that while the politicians talk and make their promises the arms pile up and become more powerful.

It is not yet 1984, but the people who support this system—the people who make the weapons and who use them and who make all the other wealth of capitalism—are as deluded as Orwell's party members. It is not an overstatement to say that capitalism survives by virtue of the working classes conviction that War is Peace, that their Slavery is really Freedom, and that the whole murderous Ignorance of it all is Strength.

IVAN.

To the brink in Vietnam

WHEN the Second World War broke out the Socialist Party of Great Britain had no hesitation in declaring its opposition. We maintained throughout that war the same position as we had taken in 1914. We based our attitude on the Socialist principle of International working-class unity and argued that the war resulted from the commercial rivalry between capitalist nations over such things as world markets, spheres of influence and investments, and mineral resources, etc. From the Socialist viewpoint workers do not own countries, empires or vested interests, they do not own the wealth which they alone produce nor the factories and so on where production takes place. Therefore, when rival capitalists fall out, as they constantly do, over the division of the wealth they have plundered from the workers, no working-class interest can be involved. Further, the workers in every country have a common interest in uniting together to get rid of their common enemy, the world's capitalist class, by bringing to an end the system that exploits and degrades them.

This attitude brought us much scorn and bitterness from the war-supporting members of the Labour and so-called Communist Parties. These and other self-appointed champions of the working-class had joined forces with the avowedly capitalist parties to win the war. They argued that democracy was at stake and therefore the interest of the workers was involved in defeating Fascism and dictatorship. There is always some plausible sounding get-out to make it appear

that this war "is a just war"; the readiness of workers to accept such stories is what makes war a continuing possibility.

For the "Communists" however, this new found love of democracy only came after the *Daily Worker* (23/8/1939) had hailed the Russian pact with Hitler as a "Victory for Peace and Socialism," and completely ignored the fact that Russia was itself a dictatorship where no vestige of democracy existed. The "Communists" having survived their former friend Hitler, are still suffering from political double-vision concerning democracy. The Socialist Party of Great Britain maintained that war could not be used as a means of defending democracy or of maintaining freedom. We pointed out that talk of freedom and democracy was just an ideological cover-up for the commercial ambitions of the rival capitalist classes, and that peace could never be other than an illusion as long as capitalism remained. There would always be new line-ups, new power-blocks as enemies became allies in the continuous quest for markets and profits. Throughout our existence we have insisted in face of all the clamourings for "something now" that the thing for world workers to do "now" is to recognise their identity of interests and unite for Socialism. Thus ending in one move the foul system which produces and reproduces all the day-to-day issues they clamour about.

There are countless examples from capitalism to prove our position to be the only sound one and, conversely, that all the arguments of our opponents are dangerous nonsense.

The most blatant current example is provided by the war in Vietnam. American capitalism is embroiled in a blood-bath which, as usual, the propaganda machine describes as a fight for freedom. The double-talk and hypocrisy have failed to hide the real nature of the regime in South Vietnam, which is openly referred to in the British newspapers as a dictatorship. On July 4th the *Sunday Mirror* published an interview with a self-confessed murderer named Nguyen Cao Ky. Under American patronage this thug became the tenth Prime Minister of South Vietnam in 20 months. In the interview he declared that his only hero is Adolf Hitler and boasted about shooting anyone who got in the way. The

interview sparked off a chain of reactions, but the *Sunday Mirror* (formerly the *Sunday Pictorial*) which supported the Second World War did not condemn this American stooge. The situation emerges where America, having fought the Second World War allegedly "to make the world safe for democracy" against Hitlerism is now backing up a Hitlerite in the name of "freedom." The politicians of capitalism are, however, nothing if not thick-skinned. The embarrassment does not seem to have been too much for the British Government or the House of Commons. The day after the interview appeared, Mr. William Warbey, a Labour M.P., raised the matter in the House, but the Speaker, Sir Harry Hylton Foster, refused a debate. Another Labour member, Mr. Frank Allaun, tabled a question for the Foreign Secretary, seeking to break off diplomatic relations with the Government of South Vietnam "whose Prime Minister has declared the policy of following Hitlerian principles." But as the *Sunday Mirror* points out, "Mr. Stewart is unlikely to agree." The Labour Government cannot afford to be squeamish about supporting a dictatorship, they are committed to running British capitalism and they need the goodwill of American capitalism economically and militarily. Just as capitalism once made bed-fellows of Russia and Nazi Germany, it now does the same for the Labour Government and Hitler's latest admirer. Cynicism and hypocrisy are inescapable for all who would retain capitalism. Democracy and freedom are ruthlessly trodden under foot and become empty words in the battle for propaganda advantage.

We seize the opportunity to again affirm — "That the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers."

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain pledges itself to keep the issue clear by expounding the CLASS STRUGGLE, and whilst placing on record its abhorrence of this latest manifestation of the callous, sordid and mercenary nature of the international capitalist class, and declaring that no interests are at stake justifying the shedding of a single drop of working-class blood . . ."

(Extract from SPGB Statement on War, August, 1914)

H.B.

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Reorganisation of the schools

THE Socialist Party of Great Britain has always emphasised the class division within capitalist society. Evidence of this can be demonstrated by the ownership of wealth, in the U.K. approximately 90 per cent of the wealth is owned by 10 per cent of the population; and by the class structure of education. Education is organised to meet the needs of capitalist society. Hence the Public Schools, which are not open to the public, charging fees between £350 and £500 per annum per pupil, provide the education for the children of the capitalist class. The state schools provide the education for working-class children, and to which attendance is compulsory unless the parent can show that the child is receiving adequate education.

Statistics of Education 1963 (HMSO) gives the total school population as 7,618,515 out of which 609,331 or eight per cent were attending fee-paying schools. This is clear evidence that ownership of wealth and privileged education go together.

We say privileged education for the purpose of public school education is to prepare the children of the capitalist class for a privileged position, the future dominant class, the whole curriculum being geared to leadership and responsibility through the fag and prefect system. Or as Katherine Whitehorn, the *Observer*, 8/8/65, writing on boys' public schools, stated, "They have no doubt of their identity as British, upper-class, and male." A good statistical example of this privileged position is the ratio of pupils to teachers, in state schools it is 23.8:1, in fee-paying it varies from 13 to 16.3:1.

When education makes the political limelight it is not on public schools that discussion centres. For at these, for an additional fee, a pupil can obtain extra education in a wide variety of subjects. Class and wealth means that a capitalist's child can receive the education that its parents think best.

Not so the working-class child. He must attend the state school, for working-class parents have neither the time nor the wealth with which to educate their own children. The child receives the education that capitalist needs determine, the education that enables him to fulfil his class function within capitalist society. In other words, he is trained to work at a particular job. As the Secretary of State for Education, Mr. Crosland, has written in the *Times Review of Industry*, April 1965, "It is vital that the work of the schools should link up with that of the technical colleges, where education can be more vocationally orientated." (Our emphasis).

The present discussion over education arises because the state system is not providing the workers that capitalist society requires. Competition with capitalists in other countries for markets means that commodities must be produced more cheaply, and consequently workers must be made more efficient. The Robbins Committee on Higher Education were "impressed by the fact that plans for expansion (of education abroad) often far surpassed present British plans." *Times Educational Supplement* (25/10/1963) and the Newsom Report pointed out that secondary modern school children's talents were not being fully developed.

The problem confronting the capitalist class is how to produce more efficient workers at the cheapest cost. Hence new plans to tap the underdeveloped talents.

The present system within state education came about after the Education Act, 1944. It provided for the selection of children for different schools as demonstrated by various intelligence and application tests—the Eleven Plus. The infallibility of these tests has long been questioned. This selec-

tive system, and streaming on ability within schools it is said adversely affects the pupil's ability to learn—if not at the top he has a sense of failure and gives up. So once again schools are to be reorganised, and the division of secondary schools into modern, technical and grammar is to give way to the comprehensive school. The reason is quite clear, nothing must hinder the production of pliable efficient workers. As the present system results in the better workers being produced in grammar and technical schools, children who would in the past have gone to the secondary modern schools are to be given the same opportunities. But this will raise the cost of education as *Education in 1964* (HMSO) recorded—Costs per pupil 1964-5: Primary £71. Under 16 years £121, Over 16 years £242. Children rarely stay at modern schools beyond the age of 16, the majority, in fact, leave at 15. Technical and grammar schools consequently have better equipment, better teachers and better pupil to staff ratios because they have more money to spend. Schools are to become comprehensive because this will raise the level of basic training in the cheapest way, for children of all ages (11-18 years), of all abilities and of both sexes.

But workers have to be convinced that comprehensive schools are desirable. As some 64 per cent of secondary children attend modern schools, if it can be argued that comprehensive schools are an improvement on modern schools the Labour Government will get much support. At the same time they must convince parents of the 24 per cent of pupils in selective schools that their education will not suffer.

The first claim for the comprehensive school gives them their title—"All children should go to the same type of school," *Observer*, 18/7/1965 (Our emphasis). The second is that it removes the need for the Eleven Plus, and by enlarging the schools it allows the employment of a greater variety of specialist teachers, which it is argued will improve the education of the less able.

It is evident that the Public Schools are not to be abolished and ALL children will not go to the same school. Different education for the different social classes will remain.

Many education authorities have already dispensed with the Eleven Plus, and the real argument for comprehensive schools can be demonstrated by the extension of the argument for comprehensive schools in rural areas. "The rural comprehensive school has developed in an area where more than one secondary school would have been expensive or extravagant, considering the small number of children living in an extensive area." *The Comprehensive School* (National Association of Schoolmasters), Costs of education on the present scale are rising, on an improved scale they will be even greater. Schools of the present typical size would not make full use of specialist teachers, rooms and equipment. Hence schools must be made larger, and if the present distinctions in secondary education were to be kept children from a wider geographical area would attend such schools with problems of long distance travel. Further, by abandoning the Eleven Plus and bringing all workers' children into the same school, by a system of sets, as distinct from streams, a child who has varying abilities in differing subjects can be placed in a group of similar ability, whereas under the stream system he would have to stay with the same group even if he were more capable in that subject. In this way comprehensive schools will enable children to progress quickly in those subjects in which they are most capable, and obtain

specialist help in subjects at which they are backward. Such schools also, because of the equipment and staff available, will in the later years direct the pupils towards vocationally based courses—Commerce, Science, Technology, leading, as Mr. Crosland has suggested, to the technical colleges where courses “will be more vocationally orientated.”

It can be seen that comprehensive schools will be more efficient in producing workers as capitalist society requires. The technical and grammar intake will have the same opportunities as before, and for the old modern intake they will be improved. There is no doubt that they will be gradually introduced for “70 out of 166 Education Authorities are implementing proposals for comprehensive education. (*Daily Telegraph*, 14/7/65); and all Education Authorities must submit their plans for comprehensive education, to the Department of Education in one year, to commence September, 1967 (*Guardian*, 14/7/1965).

But what will this education be like?

Critics of comprehensive schools point out that because of their size they lack cohesion and identification (*Daily Telegraph*, 14/7/1965). That is they are like vast factories in which the children never meet many of the staff, and likewise the staff never know many of the children—the sense of community has been removed. Further because the typical school building holds about 450 pupils and comprehensive schools require about 1,000 (some have 2,000) pupils, the present buildings are unsuitable. It appears that what will happen will be either “to group two or three existing schools together and call them comprehensive, or to carve up the 11-18 age bracket into two stages” (*Observer*, 18/7/1965).

The Newsom Report has given good indications of the conditions in secondary modern buildings, conditions which the comprehensives will inherit.

“Forty per cent of modern schools in the sample tested had seriously inadequate buildings; the corresponding figure

for the slums was 79 per cent. Only a quarter had an adequate library . . . more than a quarter had no library at all. A third of the schools had no proper science laboratories. Half had no special room for teaching music, and these included many schools in which the single hall had to serve for assembly, gymnasium and dining (*Times Educational Supplement*, 18/10/1963).

Not only will the buildings be unsuitable for the scheme but there is also a considerable teacher shortage. Mr. T. A. Casey, General Secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters in *The New Schoolmaster*, June/July, 1965, asserts that unless a further 13,000 teachers are trained each year “Britain will not be able to meet the educational needs of her ten million young citizens” in 1970.

With this reorganisation working-class children will be exhorted to work harder, under far from desirable conditions, to improve their efficiency under the guise of improving their status by gaining qualifications which will pronounce them fit for capitalist consumption. They will remain members of the working class and the educational system will not assist them in the understanding of the basis of the organisation of capitalist society—the class division; consciousness of which socialists recognise as being educated.

Education under capitalism is geared to the division of labour within a commercial system of production. Education or Training! is towards economic requirements rather than the unique requirements of the individual.

For the purposes of social efficiency under Socialism there is no necessary division of labour that impinges itself on the individual in such a way that compromises of personal interest must be permanently made.

Capitalism educates workers towards the acceptance of wage slavery, Socialist education will permit men and women to develop their abilities and personalities to the full, with no division on the basis of class.

Education for living?

“What’s this got to do with engineering?” Instead of waiting for an answer, he is staring sullenly out of the window near the back of the classroom. It would be possible to ignore it and carry on with the talk on The Cause of Two World Wars, which you have just started. Not all of them are paying attention yet; but even among those who are, some are smirking at the question. You are conscious of the fact that the employers of this eighteen-year-old apprentice would be pleased to hear him talking like this. They release him for one day a week to attend school; and they begrudge any time which is not spent in learning his trade.

Some of those who are smirking are dressed in leather jackets and bright blue jeans. They couldn’t care less whether they are wasting their time or not. At least, school is a skive from work. But his question threatens to side-track the subject of the lesson; and that appeals to them. This youngster, Wilkins, on the other hand, has a conventional haircut and wears sports jacket and flannels. He is bright too, so that any attempt you might make to explain the relevance of the subject, or the importance of their Liberal Studies period in general, will be seized upon and turned into

an argument. On balance, you decide that it would be better to keep him silent, and hope that the subject will engage his interest eventually.

While you have been weighing up the pros and cons, there has been a pause of almost five seconds, so that even the youth in the far corner who has been reading the *Daily Mirror* more or less covertly is now listening for your answer.

“Nothing at all,” you say, with a smile that signifies total confidence in what you are doing.

Wilkins snorts contemptuously out at the view.

“If you look at these maps, you can see that Germany did not even become a nation until the end of the last century, whereas Britain and France . . .”

“I mean—what do we want to know about History for?”

“Yeah! That’s in the past.”

Even a quiet fat lad at the front is muttering something similar, so that you can sense that it is going to be a waste of time while they are in this mood. They are not usually as bad as this. Perhaps it would be better if you let them get it out of their systems. “All right. Let’s put the lesson on one side for a minute. You think you should come here

just to learn engineering and nothing else, Wilkins, is that it?”

“Well, that’s what we’re going to be, isn’t it?”

“Yeah! What good’s this stuff to us? Last week it was art, or something. And we heard all about the stars, and biology and that. How’s all that gonna help us to get a good job?”

It would be taking an unfair advantage to press this small, pimply-faced boy to explain what he imagined as a good job. The youth in the corner has gone back to his newspaper; but you can afford to ignore that too for the moment. “I’m well aware that you are going to spend the best part of your lives working—whether you want to or not. But is that all life is—eat, work and sleep? By the time you are forty, and you’ve got whatever job you’re going to get—what then? You’ve got to have some other interests.” There is a dirty laugh from the middle of the room; it is taken up with gusto by the rest. You smile faintly, waiting for them to subside, and then say, “Yes—but even that wears a bit thin over the next twenty years, you know. If you’ve got no interest in the world around you, no knowledge of what’s going on, life’s a pretty dreary business. Look at Robinson,” you say with mock enthusiasm, pointing to the youth with the newspaper. “He’s keeping up with world affairs, you see—reading his newspaper.”

Robinson goes red, folds up the paper and says, “I was reading the cartoons,” anxious to disclaim any suggestion that he was doing anything intellectual.

“We don’t want none of that egg-head stuff. It’s a load o’ junk,” says pimple face.

“How do you know?”

“I don’t wanna know,” he says, getting angry. “If that lot at the top go for it, then it’s crap as far as I’m concerned.”

“What are you trying to make us all,” Wilkins sneers, “—good citizens?”

If you weren’t a socialist, this one would be a gift. You could talk with all the reformer’s enthusiasm about better opportunities for everybody, steady social improvement, increased and enriched leisure for all, and the responsibility of every citizen in forming this brave new world just round

the corner.

As it is, you know, what Wilkins only feels in his bones, that life in this system of society never works like that, because capitalism needs more restrictions and more repression and more waste the more surely freedom and abundance become possibilities. This is the root cause of Wilkins’ sceptical and truculent attitude. He can’t see why, but already, at eighteen, he has sensed that there is no way out. Some of the others despise it all, and try to live for kicks, as far as apprentices’ wages will let them. He has tried to use his intelligence by putting his faith in the only positive value he can see—work.

“I’m not trying to make you anything, Wilkins. I’m not even trying to make you into an engineer instead of a human being, which is what you seem set on becoming. If you want to be nothing else but an appendage to a machine, that’s up to you; but don’t try to kid me that it’s a full life.”

Wilkins is silenced; and the others partly take their cue from him. Instead of attacking now, they ask questions and listen to the answers. But as you go on, showing them bit by bit that the realms of the arts and sciences and world affairs are not simply for the capitalist class (without naming it), a sense of uneasiness grows in inverse proportion to your success. You know that, to them, you represent Authority, one of Them, and that the more reasonable you are, the more they like you and take your judgments on trust, the more you are reconciling them to authority, to the status quo, to the idea that a decent life is possible inside capitalism. What can you do to open up their minds to the influence of knowledge and ideas, without dissipating the sceptical and critical attitude which is their only safeguard against the prevailing climate of hypocrisy and deceit?

“What you say doesn’t add up, though, does it?” Wilkins says, putting both hands flat on his desk. “Why do they keep getting steamed up about ‘We must export more’ and ‘We must protect British interests abroad’ if that’s what caused the last two wars, in the end. If they know that, why do they keep on with it?”

“All right—why do they? It’s a good question.”

S. STAFFORD.

TORONTO LOCAL NEEDS FUNDS

The Toronto Local of the Socialist Party of Canada is planning to contest the next Federal Parliament election, and requires financial help NOW! This is a much needed project which will generate socialist ideas and build-up our Local. We need your support. Give us the money; we will put it to work FOR SOCIALISM.

THE TREASURER, TORONTO LOCAL.

KIDDERMINSTER

The newly formed Socialist Party Group in Kidderminster organised a discussion meeting with the Youth Section of the local Labour Party. Our comrade Len Young of Birmingham Branch put forward the Socialist case which was followed by questions and discussion. It was a successful meeting, but it was plain to see that these young supporters of the Labour Party need a lot more educating in what socialism really means.

SOCIALISTS IN PEACE AND WAR

(Kautsky and others had argued that while Socialists should oppose the outbreak of war, if war comes they should remain silent. Rosa Luxemburg answered this. The following are extracts from her article).

“But now ‘war is a fact’ and, as it turns out, after the outbreak of war Socialists are to be guided by entirely new principles . . . In plain language this means: The Proletariat has not one fundamental principle as scientific Socialism hitherto maintained, but two, one for peace and another for war. In time of peace we are to suppose, the workers are to take cognizance of the class struggle within the nation and of international solidarity in relation to other countries; in time of war, on the other hand, class-solidarity becomes the dominant feature of international affairs and the struggle against the workers of other countries dominates the proletarian view of foreign relations. To the great historic

appeal of the Communist Manifesto is added an important amendment, and it reads now, according to Kautsky’s revision: “Workers of all lands unite in peace and cut one another’s throats in war!” Today Down with the Russians and French! Tomorrow, “We are brothers all!”

This convenient theory introduces an entirely novel revision of the economic interpretation of history. Proletarian tactics before the outbreak of war and after must be based upon exactly opposite principles. This presupposes that social conditions, the basis of our tactics, are fundamentally different in war from what they are in peace. According to the economic interpretation of history as Marx established it, all history is the history of class struggles. According to Kautsky’s revision we must add: except in times of war.”

From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, September, 1915.

Inflation and prices

PART 3

LAST month we discussed some aspects of the price of production, and what causes the changes in a commodity's value. We then went on to the influence which the price and the value of gold has upon prices in general. So far we have assumed that the Government fixed the gold sovereign or pound at about one-quarter an ounce of gold and kept it at that amount. But suppose the Government decided to make an alteration in the law and to increase or decrease the weight of gold in the sovereign? If the Government made the sovereign half an ounce weight of gold instead of one-quarter ounce, the effect would be to cut prices of other commodities to one-half. Alternatively, if they decided to reduce the weight of gold in the pound to one-twelfth of an ounce instead of one-quarter ounce, the effect would be to multiply all prices by three. The £4 bicycle (we mentioned in Part One) would then cost £12. This would be a change in the currency unit showing itself as a rise or fall of prices. It would not affect the value relationship between gold and the other commodities—bicycles, suits or clothes and so on. The owner of one ounce of gold which formerly would buy a bicycle would still be able to buy one bicycle, but his ounce of gold would now give £12 instead of £4 and the seller of the bicycle, who formerly could get one ounce of gold for it, would still get one ounce of gold for it, but would now call one ounce £12 or 12 sovereigns instead of four.

Now this brings us to the inflationary movement that has been going on in Great Britain and in some other countries since about 1940. It may seem to have gone on in a mysterious way, but it is in fact an echo of something which has happened on previous occasions. Inflation took place during the Napoleonic Wars and again during the First World War. But before we can explain the technique of this inflation we have to ask ourselves what determines the amount of currency needed at any time.

This depends partly on the amount of trade that is going on, the amount of buying and selling transactions that are going on at a given moment, but it also depends on the rapidity with which currency itself circulates. The amount of currency needed can change because of expansion and contraction of production and trading, or because the velocity of currency circulation changes, or because the amount needed is reduced by the use of cheques, or certain other reasons. But we can still say that at a given time a given amount of currency is needed. Now when there was currency convertibility, that is to say when you could change gold into Bank of England notes and import and export it freely, the amount of currency regulated itself. Commodities were bought and sold through the medium of gold coins and notes convertible into gold which represented real values, that is to say the value of gold itself. This was a situation in which, if trade declined and less currency was needed, gold coins and notes flowed back into the Bank of England. On the other hand, if trade expanded and more currency was needed, additional amounts of it were forthcoming, but it was always directly linked with the value of gold. At that time, for every additional bank note that went into circulation from the Bank of England, the Bank had to place in its vaults an equivalent amount of gold.

We now come to the question of what happens if this convertibility is destroyed. Suppose the Government suspends convertibility and bank notes can no longer be converted into gold. This does not of itself cause inflation and rising prices. It only causes inflation and rising prices if, as well as

suspending convertibility, the Government starts increasing the issue of the unconvertible notes to an excess amount, so that they exceed the amount of gold or silver which would actually circulate if they were not replaced by symbols. We mention silver here as well as gold because some countries used a silver coinage with convertibility instead of a gold coinage with convertibility, and when we refer to symbols we mean paper money—notes.

If the Government destroys convertibility and then issues an excess amount of notes, this causes prices to rise because more money is now circulating in relation to an unchanged amount of goods and trading transactions. This is just the same in effect as the earlier example of what would happen if the Government decided to cut the amount of gold in the pound from one-quarter weight of gold to one-eighth or one-twelfth of an ounce of gold. Prices in those circumstances would double or treble. Marx wrote about this: "If the quantity of paper money issued is double what it ought to be, then £1 would be the money name not of one-quarter ounce, but of one-eighth ounce of gold." The effect would be the same as if an alteration had taken place in the function of gold as the standard of prices; those values which were previously expressed by the price of £1 would now be expressed by the price of £2.

We may be asked how can one tell if inflation has taken place, because it is not always easy to know whether the amount of paper currency being issued is in conformity with the amount needed. There is in fact always the simple measure of inflation, and that is the price of gold itself in the market. As soon as convertibility ceases and excess notes are issued the price of gold starts to rise. We saw earlier that this had happened during the Napoleonic Wars. The economist Ricardo wrote about this, and what he wrote led to the setting up of what is known as the Bullion Committee, which issued its report in 1810. Ricardo set out to explain, as did the Bullion Committee, why the price of gold in the market had gone up from 77/10½d. an ounce to 92/- an ounce. Ricardo and the Bullion Committee gave their answer; that it was due to the suspension of convertibility and to the issue of excess notes. The remedy was simply to restore convertibility, in which case the excess notes would go out of circulation. The same thing happened again in World War One, and just after that the Cunliffe Committee, which reported in 1919, gave a similar verdict. They told the Government to stop issuing excess notes and the fall of prices which took place in 1921 and 1922 was partly due to the ceiling that the Government placed on the issue of bank notes, and partly due to the fact that a world slump was in being at the time.

We now come to the inflation that has gone on in the last 25 years. Again, we can see the proof of this inflation and the measure of it in the fact that instead of gold selling at about £4 an ounce, it is now selling at 250/- an ounce. The reason is the same as on the other occasions; convertibility has disappeared and an excess note issue has been engineered by the Government. The note issue in Great Britain has increased from about £530 million in 1939 to nearly £2,400 million. The steps by which this 25-year inflation has taken place included the following.

At the original gold weight the pound was equal to 4.86 American dollars. In the 1930's it was the American Government which cut the gold content of the dollar to about half what it was before. A further step in the process was that

in 1940 the British Government pegged the British pound to the American dollar, not on the old relationship, but on a new relationship of four dollars to the pound, and in 1949 they reduced it again to 2.8 dollars. The effect of these various changes has been that the amount of gold represented by the English pound is only about one-third of what it was in 1914 and in the 1930's.

This is the main reason why the general price level in this country has more than trebled including, incidentally, the price of that particular commodity labour power—wages. It is true that the process in Great Britain has not been so crude or so drastic as the inflation which took place, for example, in Germany between the wars. On that occasion the German Government was paying its way by printing tens of millions of mark notes every day; in Great Britain now the effect is the same, though in less degree. The British Government prints additional notes and the Bank of England uses them to buy in Government securities. Incidentally, this has the effect of enabling the Government to get what may be called interest-free loans running into an amount of over £2,000 million, but, of course, the effect on the price level is just the same as it would be if the British Government had used the same direct method as was used by the German Government.

One thing it is interesting to notice here is that, being traditionalists, the British Government and the Bank of England continue to issue their accounts just as they used to issue them before 1914, as if the present note issue in this country had some backing. Before 1914 the Bank of England, apart from a certain small amount of notes which was uncovered by gold, had to have a gold reserve fully covering every additional issue of bank notes. At the present time in Great Britain there is in fact no backing at all for the note issue, but in the Bank of England accounts you can see the thing entered in the form that the £2,400 million of notes in circulation are shown on one side of the account in the balance sheet, and on the other side there is shown a similar figure for Government securities, which, of course, in practice means nothing at all.

H.

(To be concluded)

Finance and Industry

EXPORTS AND HARD WORK

"Everyone must do a full day's work for a full day's pay from now on."

"This is not a year in which we can afford large wage increases."

"There is far too much indiscipline in every part of the nation."

"We can no longer afford workers who inflict harm on production and the public with sporadic strikes."

"Production, more production, more efficient production, cheaper production."

THESE are typical of the pleas we get from Wilson and his Ministers almost every week-end now. We are told that there is a serious balance of payments problem which must be solved if prosperity is to be maintained. Labour Ministers, joined the other week by Prince Phillip, entertain us with

stories about the simple economics of the family: if you spend too much you can only make this up by sacrifice and hard work. The implication of such stories is that the population of Britain, like members of a family, have a common interest. Socialists deny precisely this; today society is composed of two classes with completely opposing interests. This is why the analogy of the family is invalid; though there is perhaps a sense in which a nation can be likened to a family: a family of capitalists who have banded together for the furtherance of their mutual interests. When people talk of "the nation," "the country" or "Britain" they are, in fact, referring to this small capitalist minority. For they are the country; Britain in this context is just a fancy collective name for them; the so-called national interest is their interest.

The balance of payments are the overseas trading and investment accounts of the capitalist class. They record, on one side, exports, loans from other capitalist groups, income from overseas investments and the investments of foreign capitalists in the home country. And, on the other side, imports, loans to other capitalist groups, income from foreign investments in the home country which goes abroad and overseas investments. These accounts are generally divided into two parts: the actual balance of trade (exports and imports) and what in Britain is called the "capital account" which records loans and investments. The balance of payments as a whole must, in accordance with simple accounting principles, balance. A deficit in the balance of trade, for instance, must be made by a surplus on the so-called capital account. Balance of payments difficulties arise when payments continuously exceed receipts. Before the last World War the deficit in the balance of trade of the British capitalist class was matched by an inflow of Profits and Interest from overseas. However, many of these overseas investments had to be sold to pay for their war. As a result at the end of the war the British capitalists found that they couldn't go on as before: now they had to try to eliminate the trade deficit altogether by increasing exports. This is their much-publicised "exports problem." The position of British capitalists is further complicated by the fact that its currency, Sterling, is one of the international means of payment and also by the fact that they act as bankers to a whole group of capitalist states known as the Sterling Area.

No group of capitalists can go on running a balance of payments deficit without in the end risking bankruptcy. There are various measures that can be taken to try to avoid this dire result (though, of course, the ups and downs of industrial production and trade mainly depend on factors which governments can't control): loans from other groups of capitalists, cut down imports, try to increase exports and to reduce costs. Devaluation, which involves making it cheaper for foreigners to buy Pounds Sterling, and thus making British exports more attractive in the World Market.

When the Labour Party took over the management of the common affairs of the British capitalists last October, they were immediately faced with a serious balance of payments problem: imports rising, reserves falling, confidence in Sterling disappearing. As they themselves have since revealed they considered that their first duty was to "Save the Pound." They got a loan from the International Monetary Fund, put on the import surcharges and the like. Most of their promised social reform schemes were "postponed" under the excuse of "clearing up the mess the Tories left." Since then a major part of their economic policy has been directed

to "saving the Pound," from Wilson's pleas for a New Britain with boardrooms full of fighting go-ahead managers and salesmen and factories full of hard-working, docile workers who have abandoned strikes, tea-breaks and clock-watching, to Brown's futile prices and incomes policy. The emphasis is always the same: old attitudes must go, British capitalism can't afford anything which increases costs from expense account lunches to Trade Unions using their economic strength to the fullest.

The general logic of this policy flows from the (correct) assumption that the continued employment of the working class depends on the continued prosperity of the capitalist class; thus to keep full employment, it is argued, the Government has to take measures to preserve prosperity (including using armed force to protect oil in South Arabia and copper, tin and rubber in Malaysia) and avoid measures which threaten to upset it (like expensive and interfering social reform schemes). This might be reasonable if you accept, as the Labour Party does, that the working class must *for ever* be dependent on the capitalist class.

After all it was Marx himself who wrote that an "indispensable condition for a tolerable situation of the worker is the fastest possible growth of productive capital." But this is merely the result of the utter dependence of the working class on the capitalist for a living in the first place. This is a dependence which Socialists say amounts to enslavement. We are wage-slaves, condemned to work all our lives for the capitalists in return for a wage or salary. But more than this we can only find employment when our masters can sell what we produce, when *they* are prosperous and affluent. Socialists say that this economic dependence on the capitalist class can and should be ended. Socialists have always urged workers to realise that their interests are completely opposed to those of their employers and to pursue policies in line with this. On the economic field the conscious pursuit of this class struggle involves using the trade unions to fight and improve wages and conditions all the time; and on the political field an organised struggle in an uncompromising Socialist Party for the conquest of political power in order to achieve Socialism.

Once it is realised that society is not one happy family with a common interest, but rather is composed of two

hostile groups then it can be seen how dangerous from the working-class point of view are the Labour Party pleas for hard work, moderation in wage demands and co-operation with capitalist enterprises ("enlightened management and co-operative labour" is what Callaghan once called for). For if accepted this would amount to a complete capitulation to the capitalist class. The Labour Party is, in fact, saying, "If you want to exist under capitalism you must do so on capitalism's terms, so **WORK HARD, DON'T STRIKE, CO-OPERATE.**" Socialists have heard this before and have always fought against this servile attitude. Under capitalism the working class must struggle; they have no choice as their economic position forces them to—this, in fact, is why this particular policy of the Labour Government *must* fail.

Exports, gold reserves and balance of payments only come into this insofar as the prosperity and affluence of the capitalist class in Britain—and so also the continued employment of us their slaves—is particularly dependent on its overseas trade. Today the workers are slaves whose interest it is to organise and struggle to free themselves. Once this is realised then it becomes obvious that exports and the like are not problems that concern the working class at all.

RACHMAN AND RENT CONTROL

In the May SOCIALIST STANDARD in a discussion of the Milner Holland Report we drew attention, as an example of the futility of reformism, to the fact that operators like Rachman were the products in part of rent control. A recent pamphlet by the Conservative Political Centre, *Target for Homes*, now says:

The particularly unpleasant strong-arm practices associated with the name of Rachman resulted from control and not from decontrol. It was only the enormous financial attraction of vacant possession that rendered it so profitable to use these unconscionable pressures to get rid of controlled tenants. If there had been no rent control and no controlled tenants this particular exercise would have had no conceivable purpose. And it is significant that Rachman's operations started some years before the 1957 Rent Act and ceased very shortly after it was passed—long before his activities became public (p.44).

A.L.B.

The results of this co-operation have been very obvious in the tenor of articles being published in the Wiener Freie Wort, recent issues of which have also carried translations of articles from The Western Socialist and The Socialist Standard. The Group is at the moment looking for suitable offices and, when these have been found, they hope to become even more active. Their future activities include plans for participation in local and General elections in Austria.

PADDINGTON AND MARYLEBONE

Paddington and Marylebone Branch have held a continuous series of lectures and discussions since Easter. We had the pleasure of listening to our comrade Alice Petersen from Copenhagen talk on the educational system in Denmark. The fol-

lowing week our veteran and staunch comrade Rudolf Frank from Vienna spoke to us about the work of the Socialist Group in Austria. And then we were visited by our comrade Charlie Davis (Secretary of the New York Local of the WSP of the USA) and we had a very interesting discussion with him. The international flavour to our meetings was continued at a later meeting when we had a visitor from Italy, who addressed the Branch in Italian, and with the help of a member who could speak Italian, members were able to discuss with him. We made a propaganda trip to Brighton and held two good meetings on the front. To the end of the year a varied series of lectures and discussions have been organised, and we welcome you to all our meetings. We meet every Wednesday at 8.45 p.m. (see page 134).

BRANCH ORGANISER.

NEWS IN REVIEW

Adlai Stevenson

If Adlai Stevenson was truly the witty and learned man he was reputed to be, he would have been appalled at the mush of vulgar clichés served up as his obituaries.

All the obituarists were agreed. Stevenson had everything but success and the tragedy of his life was that he never made the White House, because he had so many *good* ideas, he was so *liberal*, so *peace-loving*, that it only needed him to become President for the whole darn world to be an unrecognisably better place.

This old, drab story is the basis of many of the obsequies of men who spend their political lives in opposition and never in government. We heard the same regrets when Hugh Gaitskell died. Apparently a cruel fate is always denying us the benefits of being ruled by humane and capable men.

It should surprise nobody that the journalists never ask why the supposedly humane men never get to the top or why, if they do make it, they always cease to be humane.

The truth is simple. Capitalism requires that its administrators comply with certain priorities and if humanity is among them it is a long way from the top of the list. If a man gets power—as often happens—on a plausibly humane programme he must quickly change his ideas.

This is why Johnson's policies have changed, and why before him Kennedy's changed and Roosevelt's changed. Stevenson did not have to change his for the simple reason that he never got power.

And as for that, it was not so much a case of Stevenson having admirable principles which were never applied because he did not get to the White House, as of Stevenson not getting to the White House because his policies did not match up to capitalism's needs.

Tucked away into a comparatively unnoticed job, Stevenson could look after his dignity. He could discreetly let it be known that he had his reservations on United States policy on such issues as Cuba and Vietnam. Nothing was changed by this, nothing was even disturbed. It was all very cosy, and it allowed a cultured man to live his life in peace. It also allowed those obituaries.

An insignificant corner is the place for

such reservations, and for a witty and learned man—if indeed such animals exist in politic's jungle world.

The brave ones

One essential for a successful politician is the ability to sell the electorate the old gag "heads I win, tails you lose." And it is clear that the Labour Party, in the midst of the financial crises of British capitalism, are learning the truth of this.

It is really quite simple. If a Minister does something which he thinks will be well received among the voters (higher pensions, lower income tax, more houses) he claims that this is entirely the result of the government's wisdom and ability.

Heads, in other words, they win.

If, on the other hand, the government imposes measures which are going to be unpopular (higher taxes, housing cuts, higher national insurance payments) their approach is different.

These, they say, are also a result of their wisdom and ability. Much as they regret having to bring in the measures, they do it all for our benefit; somewhere in the future which we never seem to reach, we shall gain a great deal from the privations which we suffer today.

Meantime, the politicians are quick to claim another sort of credit for their unpopular measures. Such things, they say, show that whatever else they may be none can deny that they are men of *courage*.

Thus Mr. Wilson, on Mr. Callaghan's Budget last April 11th:

He told a cheering audience that it was a courageous and purposive instrument designed to strengthen Britain and to strengthen the pound. (*Daily Telegraph*, 12/4/65).

Thus Lord Stonham on 10th July last:

By courageous and decisive action we have weathered the storm we inherited, and as our policies bear fruit... (*Guardian*, 12/7/65).

In other words, although it is tails it is we, and not they, who have lost.

This kind of two-timing propaganda thrives on the short memories and the apathy of the voters. It thrives on their forgetting, for example, that however high or low taxes may be the condition of the working class remains the same.

This condition does not depend on the day to day financial juggling of capital

ism's latest set of administrators, but on the social situation—the class position—which the working class necessarily holds in capitalist society. Whatever government is in power, and whatever they do, has no effect on this.

When the working class have grasped this fact, they will have seen through the politicians' deceptions. As a start, they might realise that when a Minister says that he is going to do something courageous it is time for the rest of us to run for cover.

Mr. Heath takes the Tory helm

Mr. Edward Heath, the new Conservative leader, is said to be a moderniser; a strange recommendation to a party which waited until 1965 to select its leader by ballot. Heath's reputation is largely based on his forthright debating ability, his personality appeal, which Conservatives judge to be electorally attractive, and his determined application of policies which he conceived to be in the overall interests of British Capitalism without regard to sectional interests.

Mr. Heath was at the centre of controversies such as the abolition of retail price maintenance and the British application to join the Common Market. With bad luck, Mr. Heath's part in these two issues may well have led to his political death. As it is, Tories are now pointing to them as examples of Mr. Heath's courage, sincerity and modern approach. In fact, being modern or old fashioned doesn't come into it. Whatever alleged doctrinaire differences are pulled up and attributed to various personalities in Government, actual policies largely arise from the economic requirements of situations that Governments find themselves in. The practical necessity of these policy demands are made equally on both grammar school bright boys and plus-foured squiredom.

In spite of the interest centred on the contest for the leadership of the Conservative party, and in spite of the avalanche of press comment and speculation that went on, the only new thing about Mr. Heath is his face. Of course new faces have their usefulness in creating the illusion of a fresh determination to grasp fresh opportunities. They provide the renewed hopes without which capitalism would be even more intolerable. For as many faces that become

jaded in the depressing aftermath of anticlimax and failure, there is always a new one to replace it. Enter Mr. Edward Heath.

To say that Mr. Heath is a flexible realist whose mind is unshackled by doctrine is another way of saying that he holds no firm political principles. Indeed he is the administrator par excellence. It is not for Mr. Heath to question the basic drives and ends of modern society. The objects of profit and private ownership are accepted without demur. He is the business organisation man in Government. At their widest, his differences with Mr. Wilson or any other reformist politician boil down to a quibble over technique of administration and even these are largely contrived for electoral considerations. As ever the watchword will be mind public opinion, but administer capitalism.

Reformist parties like the Labour and Conservative parties consider that personalities in politics are important, and in electing Mr. Heath, conservatives were concerned not only to create a bright image for the future but also to provide a means of escape from the discredited past. From this point of view, Mr. Heath seems to fulfil requirements.

It seems probable now that in accepting the leadership of the Conservative party two years ago, Sir Alec Douglas Home played a stop-gap role on the promise that he would resign "as soon as the time was right for me to go." At that time, the claims of men like Heath and Maundling were weak to withstand the influence of men like Butler and Quintin Hogg, especially under the existing means of appointment. Yet in spite of their prestige, both Hogg and Butler were undesirable candidates, apart from other reasons, both wore the tarnished mantle of the MacMillan era.

During Home's stop-gap term of office, the claims of Heath and Maundling to Conservative leadership became more credible, and at the same time, Conservative M.P.'s were given the means to elect their leader by ballot. In the meantime, the political fortunes of Butler and Hogg have evaporated. Conservative M.P.'s now have the man they want.

But this is politics carried on at a trifling level that is completely removed from serious consideration of the important social problems of the time. Though they command wide interest, these paltry manoeuvrings don't begin to touch the problems of war, poverty and frustration that arise from world capitalism. The

task is to abolish capitalism, not to appoint new office boys in the running of it.

Thomson erupts

In the House of Lords on July 21st, 1965 it became apparent that Lord Thomson, who owns a lot of newspapers and who has been on television and who is a very rich man, could contain himself no longer.

It was not that he had anything irrepressibly original to say—he was actually riding a very old hobby horse which is ridden a thousand times a morning on all the Tube trains going into the City of London.

It was that mangy old nag the selfish, lazy, stupid British working man who never puts his back into it, who is always on strike (but who seems to manage to buy a car and a washing machine and a television to watch Lord Thomson on his strike pay) and who is generally no good.

"In other advanced countries," (Lord Thomson speaking) "business is highly professional, management is completely dedicated to success. It completely dominates the lives of the executives."

Now anyone who has ever come across an executive who is dedicated to success, and whose life is completely dominated by his work, knows what a ghastly human being Lord Thomson was praising.

Some dedicated men have considered it part of their success to support dictators and others have done their bit to make our lives that much less tolerable by replacing something beautiful like an unspoiled coastline or a rolling valley with something ugly like an atomic power station or an underwear factory.

Others have dedicated themselves to convincing us that our troubles were due to night starvation or that the only way to keep our teeth was but brushing them with chlorophyll or that nobody is switched on unless they have a tiger in their tank.

What Lord Thomson's standard of success amounts to is a ruthless, single minded drive for profit—for the scientific, technological exploitation of human beings, organised by machines and by dedicated sociologists, psychiatrists, technicians and any clean-collared graduate who falls for the patter.

We may be excused if we insist that human life should, and can, hold more than this.

As a matter of fact Lord Thomson did drop a hint, at the end of his speech, about his idea of a successful and dedicated man:

"I greatly appreciate the actions of George Brown. I think he is trying to do something in the interests of this country and he has my complete support in every respect. I regret that some employers and some trade unions are not co-operating with him."

Yes!

LITERATURE SELLERS WANTED

The season of political party and other conferences starts this month. Excellent publicity and literature sales can be gained for the SPGB if a concerted effort is made by Party members. Will members who can help contact J. Garnham (Literature Sales Committee), 52 Clapham High Road, London, SW4, stating which of the Conferences they can attend. It is necessary to be stationed outside the various Conference Halls by 8.30 a.m. before the morning sessions, also during the mid-day lunch break and at the close of the daily sessions. Here are the dates:

Trade Union Congress
6th to 10th September, The Dome, BRIGHTON.

Liberal Party Conference
21st to 25th September, Spa Hall, SCARBOROUGH.

Labour Party Conference
27th September to 1st October, Winter Gardens, BLACKPOOL.

Conservative Party Conference
13th to 16th October, Forte's Hall, BRIGHTON.

OXFORD
Martyrs Memorial, St. Giles
Sundays at 8 pm

STEVENAGE
Clock Town Square, New Town
Saturdays, 3 pm

BRIGHTON
The Fishmarket
Sundays, 3 pm

LONDON
Sundays
Hyde Park, 3 and 6 pm
East Street, Walworth
September 5th (1 pm)
September 19th (11 am)
September 12th and 26th (noon)
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 8 pm

Mondays
Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm
Earls Court (Sept. 13th and 27th)
8 pm

Wednesdays
Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers Street) 8 pm

Thursdays
Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm
Earls Court, 8 pm
Bromley Library, 8.30 pm

AUTUMN DELEGATE MEETING
at Head Office
52 Clapham High St., London, SW4
Saturday, 16th October, 2.30-6 pm
Sunday, 17th October, 11 am-6 pm

MEETINGS

GLASGOW
Sunday, 12th September 7.30 pm
McClennan Galleries
A SOCIALIST VIEW ON VIETNAM
London Speaker

CENTRAL LONDON
Asquith Room, 2 Soho Square, W1
First of the new series of Sunday meetings commences on October 24th at 8 pm (doors open 7.30 pm)
AFTER 12 MONTH'S HARD LABOUR—WHAT NEXT?
Speaker: C. May

HACKNEY
Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St., E9
(facing Hackney Empire)
Wednesdays at 8 pm

8th September
EXPORTS AND WAGES
Speaker: A. L. Buick

22nd September
"PUBLIC" INTERESTS? versus TRADE UNIONS
Speaker: J. McGuinness

STEVENAGE
Red Lion, High Street

Monday, 6th September, 8 pm
TRADE UNIONS
Speaker: A. Fahy
Monday, 20th September, 8 pm
REFLECTIONS OF A SOCIALIST
Speaker: H. Waite

WELWYN GARDEN CITY
Community Centre, Mill Green Road
Thursday, 23rd September, 8 pm
PROBLEM OF THE RAILWAYS
Speaker: H. Barlow

KIDDERMINSTER
The Station Inn, Fairfield
Wednesday, 8th September, 7.30 pm
DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM
Speaker: J. Amos

PADDINGTON
The Royal Oak, York Street, W1
(near Marylebone Station)
Wednesdays 8.45 pm

8th September
AIR
Speaker: W. Waters

15th September
FASHION THROUGH THE AGES
Speaker: Anne Young

29th September
INTER-BRANCH MEETING
with Bloomsbury and West London

6th October
WOMEN AND SOCIETY
Speaker: K. Graham

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The passing show

SONS OF PEACE

We have only to mention such names as Berlin, Korea, Suez, Lebanon and Cuba, to recognise something they all have in common. All of them have at some time or other been trigger spots over which an extra large squabble has threatened something even bigger and more horrifying. At the time of writing, Vietnam is the current trigger spot and even the most ignorant must be aware of the slaughter which is going on there.

President Johnson has announced that the U.S. forces will be increased by fifty thousand men—"We are not going to be pushed out of Vietnam", he says with cold-blooded frankness. His move, we can be sure, will be matched by the Vietcong and their supporters, and the situation moves one step further up the escalator.

But you may or may not have noticed the hypocrisy that gushes to the surface at a time like this. Nobody likes going out to war, but once it starts it's difficult to stop, so there's plenty of political prestige for the capitalist politician of perhaps a smaller "uncommitted" power if he can convince people that he has been responsible for putting a stop to the fighting. It's a bandwagon which rolls merrily along, pausing only briefly between blood baths, and the assortment of individuals clambering aboard is bizarre indeed.

You may recall Korea, for example, and the appeals of the Indian government for a cessation of the hostilities—the very power which had gone to war only a few years before with Pakistan over the Kashmir issue. Since then Goa and the Rann of Kutch have been added to the nasty little list of "incidents" over which the Indian rulers have used force to push their interests, but these have not prevented the late Mr. Nehru, and his successor Mr. Shastri, from posing as peaceful mediators when some of the bigger powers have squabbled.

Perhaps you can think of any number of other examples, but to bring you up to date, the bandwagon has a new passenger. *The Guardian* of August 22nd reports that the gentle warrior Marshal Tito is trying to get a peace conference going over Vietnam. He will also ask that other war hater President Nasser of Egypt, to urge the peace loving Chou en-lai of China to "take a more constructive role in the Vietnam Crisis". Apparently these moves are a result of talks in Belgrade between Tito and the

Indian Prime Minister—obviously, whoever slips off the bandwagon, Mr. Shastri is determined to stay on it.

Just what the word "constructive" means in this context is anyone's guess. As far as the contestants are concerned it will be only when the other side backs down, and until that happens, the slaughter and destruction will continue. So will the crocodile tears and the hypocrisy.

RIGHT-ABOUT-TURN

The government announced at the beginning of August that the immigrant quota is to be severely curtailed. About 300,000 Commonwealth applicants won't stand a chance of entry, and only some 8,500 work vouchers a year will be issued. A far cry from the days of unqualified Labour opposition to restriction when Gaitskell was their leader? Maybe, but a politically popular decision nevertheless, and that's what matters to the parties of capitalism.

Ironical is it not, then, to look further afield and find that the Australian Labour Party has now taken the opposite stand to that of its British counterpart, although it has always been a staunch supporter of a "white Australia" policy. Its statement of August 2nd says:

Convinced that an increased population is vital to Australia's future, the Australian Labour Party will support and uphold a vigorous and expanding immigration programme administered with sympathy, understanding and tolerance. (*Guardian*, 3/8/65).

Now there may be a number of reasons for this change of front. Although the policy up to now has been to encourage British and Europeans and discourage Asians and other coloureds. Australian capitalism has been short of labour power for a long time, and the present policy has not succeeded in overcoming it. Then again, the Australian Labour Party may have its eye on the new independent Asian states not very far away, and its new policy could be an attempt to placate them (President Sukarno of Indonesia has for his part been saying some nice things about Australia just lately). Or maybe it's a combination of factors, all contributing to what the ALP thinks are modern capitalism's requirements. One thing is certain from the statement above, and

(continued bottom of next page)

Letter

Dear Sirs,

Today I listened to a SPGB speaker at the Mound, Edinburgh's centre of informal political discussion. This speaker criticised and denounced the whole British Labour Party in politics as well as its whole organisation. Why? Because it is not Socialist enough, he argued.

Now, I gather from your aims, published in the Socialist Standard that you are for political as well as economic democracy. The only means of political democracy is an elective, representative house, and this means "politics" in its most common meaning.

This is the stumbling block—temporary though it is—to the progression of Socialism from the direction of the Labour Party. It is all very well for the SPGB to criticise the Labour Party but in our political democracy, Socialism must at times be suspended for reasons of political expediency. Otherwise Socialism in politics is crippled, and the day for which we struggle no nearer.

This is the reason for the Labour Party's slow, actual movement leftwards. In theory it is as Socialist as your Party, but for the fulfilment of and the progress towards the Socialist aim through the machinery of politics, its progression must be necessarily slow.

The SPGB does a great job. It must be constantly winning supporters if not members, of the Socialist cause. But it would be mistaken of you, I think, to challenge the Labour Party in politics. We must have a united British Socialist movement, for this is the quickest way to success. The SPGB's purpose should be to win members and supporters, and to influence the Labour Party policy in all its aspects. Political rivalry is

the quickest, surest way to Socialist disunity—rather the quicker path of Socialist unity to our common goal.

Of course one can criticise Labour short term and current policy, but your speaker implied that he and you disagreed with Labour's long term, overall plan. What are your views?

Edinburgh, 10.

FRASER GRIGOR.

REPLY

Of course our speaker "criticised and denounced the whole British Labour Party". Why should he do otherwise? The Labour Party is no more a Socialist organisation than the Conservatives or Liberals. It seeks votes on a programme (long term and otherwise) of administering and reforming capitalism and must therefore earn our condemnation as much as the others—including those leaning "leftwards" like the so-called "communists".

If our critic thinks we are being unjust, it is up to him to produce evidence that the Labour Party is Socialist; all we can say is that we have studied the Labour Party for the well-nigh sixty years of its existence, and it is obvious that the membership have not the foggiest idea of what the word Socialism means. Mr. Grigor thinks that Socialism must be suspended at times for reasons of political expediency, which is condemnation enough of the Labour Party's activities when it is remembered what over half a century of "suspension" has meant in terms of working class misery and the horror of two enormous wars (both Labour supported).

Incidentally, it amazes us how, even after only a short dose of the present Labour

administration, our correspondent can think that they have the slightest interest in a classless, moneyless world of common ownership and democratic control. Imports and exports, wages and prices, gold and dollar reserves, etc.—these are their obsessions. They are in fact up to their necks in the mire of capitalism.

We are told—and how many times have we heard it—that we should not challenge the Labour Party, but try to influence its policy instead. Presumably this means we should act as a ginger group, either boring from within or nibbling from without, but for what earthly purpose? As members, we would run the risk of expulsion and either way we would earn the hostility of the Labour rank and file. Certainly we would stand no chance of swinging the organisation over to Socialism—we might just as well try our luck with The Primrose League.

Our party learned this lesson from its inception, when some of our founder members were expelled from the old Social Democratic Federation for trying to preach Socialist ideas. We saw then that a Socialist Party must be completely independent of and hostile to all other parties, and must have Socialism as its sole aim. Only in this way have we been able to keep the idea alive—not an easy task and one which has not been made any lighter by the confusion and misunderstanding caused by the Labour Party.

Socialism is the only answer to the problems of the world today and we work ceaselessly for the time when the working class of the world will unite to achieve it. Far from agreeing that it should be shelved for any reason, the need for it grows more urgent with every passing day.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

THE PASSING SHOW continued

that is that it's not brotherly love for the coloured worker that has motivated it.

But don't forget that the ALP is not in power at present, and if it ever does become the government again, we could well see a *volte face* if the situation demanded it. The Labour Party may do the proposing, but capitalism always does the disposing.

GASPERS

NATO has been a success and the measure of that success has been the shift of the threat from the West to the East. (Mr. R. Maudling in a Commons debate, 20/7/65).

Nobody has put any pressure on me to resign and nobody has suggested that I should go, but there are those who feel that a change of leadership would be right. (Sir A. Douglas Home, on his resignation, 22/7/65).

Since 1945 it has become plain that the alternative government system is a defective means of securing national recognition of economic facts which exist whichever party is in power. (*Guardian* political correspondent, 29/7/65).

The new leader sounded decidedly thin when it came to the Conservative remedies, many of which sounded nearly indistinguishable from Labour remedies. (*Guardian* comment on Commons censure debate, 3/8/65).

E.T.C.

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SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (7th and 21st Oct.) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 1st Oct. at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath and 15th Oct. at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham, SE9. Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 37 Beltane Street, Glasgow, C3.

HACKNEY 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KENSINGTON Fridays 8 pm, 55 Meadvale Road, Ealing, W5. (temporarily). Correspondence: R. Cain, 35 Wallham Road, Southall, Middlesex.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Nelson, above address.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

KIDDERMINSTER Enquiries: J. Amos, 31 Sion Hill, Broadwaters. Meets 2nd Wednesday in month at 7.30 pm, Station Inn, Farfield, Comberton Road, Kidderminster.

For information

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 246811.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

MID HERTS Meets 1st and 3rd Monday in month at The Red Lion, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd and 4th Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel.: Hatfield 4802.

NOTTINGHAM 1st Sunday in month (3rd Oct.) at 2.30 pm in the Committee Room, Co-operative Hall, Heathcoat Street, Nottingham. Enquiries: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive, Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesday 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX 1st and 3rd Thursdays (7th and 21st Oct.) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (11th and 25th Oct.) 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowd, Llansyfelach, Swansea.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (14th and 28th Oct.) in month, 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (8th and 22nd Oct.) in month, 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Meets last Friday in month at 7.30 pm, The International Centre, George Street. Enquiries: A. Atkinson, 4 St. Martins Road, Ashton on Mersey, Sale, Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

SUNDERLAND Enquiries: P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham. Meets 1st Sunday in month, 8 pm, Crown & Thistle, High St., W.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MAI 5165.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1) That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2) That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3) That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4) That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5) That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6) That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7) That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8) The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

October 1965 Vol 61 No 734

Socialist Standard

Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

The Pakistan-India conflict

The war between Pakistan and India was another depressing reminder that men are still more ready to unite for nationalism and war rather than for world brotherhood. In a region blighted by acute poverty, hunger and disease was accompanied by fighting and violent death.

The reasons given for the conflict are especially cynical. Mr. Shastri's Congress Party inherits the supposed ideals of Ghandi and Nehru. In the post-war years, Mr. Nehru in particular sermonised at length about peace. Today India is forced into that oldest and yet most modern of arbiters—war! Now that private property is in dispute, the pacifism of Ghandi has been forgotten.

Peace cannot exist in a violent society and Capitalism is violent. It is violent because it rests upon the exploitation of men by men. It is violent because it is geared to commercial struggles and is driven by the profit motive. Capitalism is violent because under it men act out the aggressive nature of private property. To want peace and yet preserve Capitalism is a contradiction which repeats the fatal errors of the past.

Indian and Pakistani workers rallied to the fighting with enthusiasm. Immigrants in this country lost no time in forming defence committees. Some workers readily donated a week's wages. "My country right or wrong" prevailed.

Those workers involved in the conflict are victims of false religious loyalties, and their support for developing Capitalism in Asia. They mistakenly think that their interests are identical with the interests of the Indian and Pakistan ruling class.

The situation is one in which Capitalism asserts all its priorities. There is the fighting itself, the disruption and added misery this inevitably brings. There is the spectacle of men channelling their resources into destructive causes instead of into the creative task of ending poverty. There is the vicious fervour which can unify a nation on a war footing, stifling criticism, and temporarily diverting internal frustrations. The commitment to the senseless struggle can easily become self-perpetuating.

To Socialists the condemnation of the war between Pakistan and India is a condemnation of world Capitalism. It is not an isolated incident resulting from the aggressions of a single nation. International finger-pointing blinds men against the real cause. It is an event made possible by the support that Capitalism commands throughout the entire world. In this respect, workers in this and other countries far from the scene of fighting, are involved. It is futile to appeal to political leaders to act with more restraint or so-called wisdom. A world of harmony can only be possible when the working class of the world contract out of supporting Capitalism.

It is important to emphasise that although the conflict has been expressed in terms of Muslim versus Hindu, and although religious differences are a factor in the situation, the war was not over religion. The war was over the conflicting Capitalist interests of the Indian and Pakistan ruling classes and rapidly involved the great powers, particularly China.

Our message to Indian and Pakistan workers is that this conflict in which they have nothing to win, can only heap misery on abiding misery. Their interests in common with workers of all countries is to build Socialism.

Just as religion is a bastion of ignorance, so nationalism is a hate-filled lie. Both serve private property interests in which the worker has no stake.

A marriage of convenience

EVER since they slipped into power last October the Labour Government have been pursued by speculations on whether they would come to an arrangement with the Liberals which would have the effect of keeping them in power. This speculation has, of course, become more intense as the Government's majority has been slowly whittled down.

The idea of a Lib/Lab alliance, as the newspapers are fond of calling it, is not new. *The Guardian*, which is running a campaign in favour of it, recently published a series of extracts from editorials of 1912, 1924, 1926 and 1929 which advocated such an alliance (although it is difficult to appreciate what this was supposed to prove).

The whole thing is, in fact, one of the most grisly of all the spectres which haunt the Labour Party from their uncomfortable past. Their first attempt at Government, in 1924, was brought about only because the Liberals supported them, but the same Party turned Labour out of office as quickly as they had put them in. When they came back in 1929, Labour's leader, Ramsay MacDonald, left us in no doubt about where he thought the blame for his previous defeat lay. "I am," he told the press, "Going to stand no monkeying."

This sounded very grand. Yet if anyone was doing any monkeying it was MacDonald himself, because despite his experience in 1924 he was once more relying on Liberal votes in the House to keep a minority Labour Government in power. This showed that Mr. MacDonald possessed the one essential quality of an "intellectual," which is the ability to ignore inconvenient facts.

As it turned out, MacDonald went further than a mere voting pact with the Liberals. When the crunch came a couple of years later, when the unemployment figures were around the three million mark, when the finances of British capitalism were in turmoil, and when the Government were imposing panic cuts in expenditure, MacDonald did not wait for the Liberals or anyone else to defeat him in the Commons. He led the way into a coalition with the Liberals and the Tories. He joined hands with the men regarded by generations of Labour workers as representatives of the hated mine owners and steel masters, of the hard-faced men who had ground the working class down into unforgettable destitution.

There is no need to recall here the shattering effect which this had on the Labour Party. It is enough to say that the debacles of 1924 and 1931 made coalition a forbidden word in respectable Labour circles.

Of course, these same circles saw nothing wrong in their Party joining the wartime coalition, even if this was under the man who was a lifelong enemy of the working class, who had been openly contemptuous of starving miners and who had so zestfully edited the official *British Gazette* during the General Strike, when the workers were desperately defending what remained of their livelihoods. The war coalition was, apparently, different. Churchill was no longer our enemy. He was our friend and protector. This coalition, said the Labour Party, was in what they called (but which they were not rash enough to attempt to define) the National Interest.

We should all be aware by now that when the bugles are blowing to rally us all to defend the National Interest a certain amusement can be had by observing countless politicians, men who swear by their own honesty and consistency, going back on a lot of what they ever said. Thus it was with the Labour Party, when they embraced their bitterest foe and

joined the Churchill coalition in 1940. This gave them the experience of running capitalism which stood them in good stead when they took over in 1945 and had to tell the working class that the promises made during the war could not (naturally) be kept.

But no bugles are blowing now. The Labour Party cannot pretend that a pact with the Liberals would have anything to do with their precious National Interest. It would have only one object and that would be to keep the Labour Party in power. Ten regular Liberal votes in the House would enable Mr. Wilson to luxuriate in unaccustomed security of tenure at Number Ten. There is no secret about the price of these votes—a tailoring of the Government's programme, to drop steel nationalisation and to push ahead with schemes like the Ombudsman.

Or the Labour Party could go into whole-hog coalition with the Liberals, and Mr. Wilson preside over a Government containing one or two Liberal ministers. Or again—another favourite dream of political wanderers—a new party could be formed, a so-called radical party with a programme consisting of bits and pieces from both Parties, mashed up and blended into something which, it is hoped, would attract massive electoral support.

Any of these is possible. It is evident that the Liberals, as distant from power as ever, are awaiting their chance. Mr. Grimond's famous interview with the *Guardian* some months ago could not have been entirely a coincidence. It is more likely that the ground had been prepared in advance. This interview might have been Mr. Wilson's chance to inspire his disconsolate supporters with a valorous, defiant refusal, to goad them forward on their devious, never-ending journey to the Promised Land. Instead, the Liberal offer was met with a heavy silence which, when we consider the business of coalition government, and of government itself, assumes a certain significance.

Governments are there to run capitalism, which means in the general National Interest of the capitalist class. Governments look after the economic affairs of that class, they keep up the machinery by which the capitalists assert their dominance in society. Governments concern themselves with customs laws, trading pacts, the police, prisons and armed forces. They look after capitalism's finances and they do their best to weaken what bargaining power the working class may have in matters of wages, hours and so on.

Whether they are dictatorships or so-called democracies, governments always face a certain amount of opposition. This means that to stay in power politicians must exercise a deal of cunning and ruthlessness. The manner and the field in which these qualities—if that is the word for them—are applied varies with the type of government. In this country, where governments are elected by popular (if not very enlightened) vote, political skill often expresses itself in a politician's ability to do one thing and persuade the mass of people that he is doing the exact opposite. This skill sometimes reaches a very high level, as, for example, when it was being practised by Baldwin and later Macmillan. It seems that Harold Wilson has also won his way into this distinguished company.

This is the perspective in which we should view Wilson's silence at Grimond's offer of an alliance. The Labour Party are supposed to be opposed to the Liberals, but in fact they have done little, in major policy, to displease them. True, they have pushed through a declaration that they intend to

nationalise steel, but so far this remains no more than a declaration. On most other issues—as the *Guardian* never tires of bleating ("It will be a tragedy if the Government is brought down needlessly. Much of what it wants to do is common to the Liberal and Labour Parties." 6/9/65), the two Parties are in harmony.

This means, in effect, that Mr. Wilson has the votes of the Liberal members. In other words, he has all the advantages of a Lib/Lab coalition without any of the disadvantages. He is doing one thing while convincing everyone that he is doing the opposite. In addition, he does not have the tiresome necessity of allocating jobs to the Liberals, he is not exciting the emotions of Labour Party workers who remember 1924 and he is left with the tactical asset of being able to fix the date of the next election.

This is by no means a surprising situation. The only thing to prevent an alliance between political parties is a difference of principle and the capitalist parties showed in 1931, and again during the war, that they are all united on the basic principle of protecting the National Interest of the British ruling class. Compared to this, whatever differences they may have are trivial. The Labour Party have always claimed they were basically different from the others, but experience shows us that in fact they are merely another administration for British capitalism. Even more, they have claimed that their close connections with the unions would enable them to hold wages in check—in other words, to do capitalism's dirty work—much more efficiently than the Tories could do it. Recent events at the T.U.C., and in Mr. Brown's Depart-

ment of Economic Affairs, shows that this is one claim Labour have made good.

The Wilson Government's policies have upset many of their supporters; in the *Guardian* of 6th September last, for example, Mr. Reginald Paget, Labour M.P. for Northampton, was asking: "Ought a Labour Government, committed to Tory expediency, be permitted to continue in office? . . . should they be allowed another session?" The obvious answer to these questions is that it all depends upon Mr. Paget—only one vote, after all, is needed to turn the Government out. But who is really to blame for all these broken hopes? Mr. Paget is disillusioned simply because he had illusions to lose. He actually believed, in the face of all evidence, that a Labour Government would be different from a Conservative. Now that Labour have once again shown how similar they are, they have not only confused their friends; they have also confounded their enemies. Even Mr. Heath, strain as he might, can pick no specific quarrel with them—only vaguely accuse them of not doing the "right sort of deeds."

The whole point is that, whether they formally admit it or not, all the capitalist parties are constantly in coalition to support the private property system of society. In many ways they actually need each other. But even more they need the votes of the millions of workers who are misled into thinking that capitalism is in their interests and who, if Mr. Grimond ever succeeds in getting Mr. Wilson to the church on time, will be lining the aisles to give the uneasy couple their blessing.

IVAN.

What a lovely war!—for some

The "rights" and "wrongs" of the war in Vietnam are discussed *ad nauseum*, and the story varies according to who is telling it. One thing, which everyone knows is that each day people are killed, wounded, made homeless and their lands and means of livelihood devastated.

Although everyone knows that weapons are needed to conduct a war, not much thought is generally given by the Man In The Street to the enormously increased profits being raked in by arms manufacturers.

In the *Financial Times* of 12th May appeared an article "The Defence Industry's Shot in the Arm". At the end of last year, it appears, much concern was caused among arms manufacturers in the U.S. by the announcement of an Industrial Research and Management Consultancy firm that the aerospace industry must expect a drop of 30 per cent over the five years up to 1969, due to the cutting back of the missile programme.

However the capitalists of this industry can, it appears, once more sleep easily, secure in the knowledge that orders for

military helicopters have been doubled by the Defence Department. The Bell Company has already received a contract worth \$50 million for the production of these helicopters and the Avco Corporation are to get an order worth \$45 million.

In addition there is the happy expectation in other parts of the Defence Industry of the need for another 200 Douglas Skyraiders; and orders for replacement parts for these aircraft and for Thunderchief bombers are likely to be heavy. Lockheed Transport expect a large increase in orders for their military transport planes and several new war planes are under test with a view to their use in Vietnam.

The intention to add 340,000 men to the armed forces in Vietnam spells fat contracts for clothes, vehicles and ammunition, and contracts worth millions of dollars have recently been awarded to various weapons and ammunition manufacturers.

No doubt all these manufacturers look forward with happy confidence to the next few years. Compared with such

profits and prospects the loss of a few thousand lives—Vietnamese and American, while regrettable, must surely—in their view—be borne with equanimity.

E.G.

The WESTERN SOCIALIST

Journal for Socialism in the U.S.A. and Canada

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The Monarchy - past, present and future

OLD ideas die hard, and every age, including the present, is strewn with the debris of the past.

By far the biggest collection of such debris is the Monarchy. All levels of society, from Parliament down, are thick with relics of this once powerful institution. In theory the Monarchy is the centre, and ultimate seat, of power; in reality it is a mere shadow with nothing left of its old influence. But although a shadow, it has a tremendous hold on unthinking minds.

The Monarchy for many centuries really was the centre of power and authority, and the battle against it was long and bitter, but even now when it is won and over, large numbers of people either fail or refuse to grasp the fact. They still write personal letters to the Queen asking her to exercise one of her prerogatives such as the prerogative of mercy. Such letters are, of course, automatically passed on to the appropriate department. But the royal prerogatives and powers, completely hollow as they are today, were not always so. Each one was a powerful weapon in the hands of the Crown, and it used them constantly in its battle with Parliament.

To quote just a few; the Privy Council was once the King's Council, the highest body in the land; it supplied the Ministers of the Crown, and through the Court of Star Chamber could overawe any subject. The right to create Peers enabled the Crown to fill the Upper House with its own supporters, while the right to grant and withdraw charters to towns was used to pack the Lower House. The right to dissolve Parliament (still in theory a Royal Prerogative, but in practice decided by the outgoing Prime Minister) was used to get rid of an awkward Commons, in the hope of a more pliable one being elected. Again Wardship, so beloved of Sunday Newspapers in elopement cases, once gave the King control over heiresses. This was both a means of putting political pressure on their parents, and—by the sale of the control of minors—a source of ready cash.

The Monarchy today is popular. After all it is difficult to fall out with something that says nothing, attacks nobody, expresses no controversial opinions, and is all things to all people. The Monarchy is said to be above politics, which means out of politics. It will accept all governments whatever their party or policy, and although the titular head of the Church of England, will greet the Pope or the Salvation Army with the same meaningless affability, Jew or Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist, they are all in the fold; in fact it is difficult to keep out of it.

This was not always so. Until well into the 19th century the Monarch was a politician, and as such suffered the ups and downs of popularity common to politics. Queen Anne was a Tory and recognised as one, while Victoria on her ascension openly supported the Whig government of Lord Melbourne. Monarchs shared the unpopularity of the parties they identified themselves with. William IV, at the time of the 1832 Reform Bill, was pelted with clods of earth by the London mob, while Victoria was greeted with shouts of "Mrs. Melbourne" by the same well-mannered crew. Victoria spent most of her long reign in various stages of unpopularity. In the early days attempts were made to assassinate her, and bitter personal attacks were made in the Press. The Prince Consort was made the butt of comic songs from the stage of the early Music Halls. It was only during Victoria's last 20 years, when the power of the Crown was largely at an end, that she began to be built up into a legend.

The usual line, which was heard a lot of at the last Coronation, was that the Georges were unpopular because of their immoral lives and bad behaviour, and that Victoria's blameless life restored the prestige of the Crown. This theory does not bear examination. George III, who reigned for 60 years—nearly as long as Victoria—lived a life of domestic dullness that not even the most prudish of Victorians could have objected to. This fact, far from endearing him to his subjects, was the cause of ribald songs sung in taverns, treating his "virtue" as a joke. It was the political position of the throne, and not the private life of its occupant, that decided popular sentiments.

By the time of the Restoration an uneasy balance between King and Parliament had been struck, with the King as the Executive—a kind of permanent President—appointing and dismissing Ministers and controlling affairs, and Parliament as the Legislature, with the sole right to levy taxes. This was the idea accepted by most of the participants in the Civil War. Only a minority of people, with ideas ahead of their times, thought of Parliament as the sovereign body. Judicial murder, although becoming rare, was still a hazard during the reigns of Charles II and James II. An unsuccessful politician still stood the chance of having a phoney charge of treason fixed on him, and conviction by a packed court. This largely disappeared after 1688.

The Revolution of 1688 weakened the Crown, William and Mary becoming joint Sovereigns on conditions laid down by Parliament. The Bill of Rights established Parliament's right to elect the sovereign, change the order of succession, and depose a King. The Act of Settlement of 1701 extended these powers. Kings were forbidden to leave the country without the consent of Parliament, and no judge could be removed except by Parliament. Thus began the slow but steady stripping of power from the Crown, and its transfer to Parliament, that went on through the 18th and early 19th centuries. This process was aided by the fact that from Queen Anne to William IV, or to quote the terms of common abuse from "Brandy Nan" to "Silly Billy," the throne was occupied by a line of people of the most monumental incompetence. Not that Parliament in the 18th century was even remotely democratic, the vast majority of the people having no vote. Power at National level was largely in the hands of the Aristocracy—the large landowners—and at local level in those of the gentry or lesser landowners. The masses, especially in London, expressed themselves by bouts of rioting and arson.

By the time of Victoria's ascension the power of the Crown was largely gone, but she could still, in 1839, keep a Whig government in power by refusing to appoint Peel to Prime Minister in spite of the government's lack of a proper majority. Victorian politics were tough and dirty, and the methods used to force the hand of the Queen were ruthless in the extreme. An interesting point is the part played by those later pillars of respectability, the *Times* and the *Morning Post*, who printed stuff that would land a modern editor in gaol.

What the future of the Monarchy will be is anybody's guess. One thing is certain. If the bulk of the Capitalist class decide to end it, they will do so. After all they got rid of one King in 1936, and would not hesitate to get rid of the whole lot. Something that is equally certain is that if the Monarchy goes, but Capitalism remains, the working class will not notice any difference. Except perhaps for a different head on the postage stamps.

L. DALE.

Inflation and prices

PART 4 [concluded]

IN this last instalment it may be useful to make a few brief comments on the subject which we have been discussing.

A great many people think that higher prices are caused by higher wages; they look at what has been happening in the last 20 or 25 years and they think this proves their point. One fact is enough to dispel this belief. Between 1945 and 1951 the retail price index was more or less continually rising faster than wage rates, it was not a question of wages going up and prices following, but the reverse. Secondly, it has to be remembered that in a period of continuing inflation, when manufacturers can more or less confidently expect that there will be a steady rise of prices of, say, five per cent a year because of inflation, they would often prefer to give a wage increase when it is demanded than to risk a strike. And, of course, they never fail to represent the price rise which would take place anyway as having been due to the wage increase. They will often time their price increases to follow a wage increase to give this impression, although if market conditions are against them, they cannot put up their prices whether they want to or not and whether wages have gone up or not.

At the present time the Government in Great Britain talks in terms of having no more inflation, even if this might mean fighting the trade unions over wage claims and risking big strikes. It remains to be seen whether they will. While relatively full employment lasts, the trade unions are in a fairly strong position, rather different from the situation between the wars when there was always at least a million unemployed.

Governments do not always prefer inflation. In certain countries they carry out the reverse—a deflationary movement—as the British Government did after the First World War. On that occasion prices went down by about one-third, and wages came down with them. Russia since the Second World War has twice up-valued the rouble, replacing the old currency by a new and much reduced quantity of notes. France did the same in 1960. One of the reasons why in Great Britain the Government is unlikely to try to reduce

prices to anything like their former level is that its obligation to pay hundreds of millions of pounds on the National Debt would become an enormously increased real burden, if they had to pay it in currency, the purchasing power of which was being increased by the deflationary fall of prices.

During the last 25 years the holders of Government securities have found that the real value of their holdings and the purchasing power of the interest they received on them are steadily being reduced by the falling value of the pound. This has suited the interests of the general body of capitalists in Great Britain.

When Russia in 1947 up-valued their rouble they got over that particular difficulty by simultaneously reducing the amount of bond holdings. A Russian, for example, who had Government bonds to the value of 1,000 roubles, found when the up-valuing of the rouble took place, that his holding of Government bonds was cut by one-third or one-half.

No city editor or orthodox economist accepts the Marxian view that the increase of a non-convertible note issue is a cause of inflation. Some of them, including some of the followers of the late Maynard Keynes, deny that the note issue has been excessive, and say that it has merely kept pace with the currency needs required by expanding trade. It is, however, for them to explain why it was necessary to multiply the note issue in Great Britain by nearly five times in face of the fact that the actual physical volume of production in Great Britain is now not more than about five per cent above the pre-war level. Obviously, these two facts do not square with the interpretation put on the note issue. It is a reasonable assumption that the excess issue has only been made necessary by the multiplied price level, which has itself been largely caused by the note issue. Another group of economists deny that the note issue matters any more, one way or the other. It is for them to explain why the Government troubled to multiply the note issue if it is not of sufficient importance to have any effect.

H.

Capital's reserve army

THE capitalist system requires for its proper functioning a reserve army of unemployed workers which it can draw on in times of expansion and cast aside in times of contraction. This remains as true today as when Marx first drew attention to it a hundred years ago. At that time every country had within its borders such an industrial reserve army composed of its own subjects. In Britain today with unemployment since the war at comparatively low levels some people have drawn the conclusion that Capitalism has reformed itself so as to abolish large-scale unemployment. However, Capitalism is an international system, political boundaries don't matter to it. Industries in all the countries of the world are linked by means of the world market. Looked at from this point of view Capitalism has by no means abolished large-scale unemployment.

International Capitalism may have put to work nearly all the native workers in Britain, France and West Germany, but as Capitalism expands so does its demand for workers. If these can't be found within a country they must be drawn from outside. This is precisely what has happened. The

capitalists of North West Europe have drawn on the reserve of workers in such places as Spain, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey as well as from North Africa, Malta and Cyprus. Britain, France and Holland can also draw on their former colonial territories in the West Indies and in Asia. In these areas which are, as it were, on the outskirts of Capitalism unemployment is very high. But it has been noticed that workers don't leave just because of high unemployment and low wages. They leave and return in accordance with the needs of Capitalism in the more developed parts of the world. They form a true industrial reserve army.

The myth has been created in the post-war years that the boom-slump cycle inherent in the capitalist system has been overcome. This is just not true as any worker in the motor industry could tell you. The indices of industrial production, trade and unemployment still show fluctuations. True, the effects of these fluctuations haven't been so widespread as in the past, but that's another matter (connected, in fact, with the growth of non-industrial employment). The point is that such fluctuations do still take place. And migration

from the "labour reserves" takes place in accordance with them.

In the quarterly magazine *Race*, for July, 1965, Ceri Peach has an article, *West Indian Migration to Britain: The Economic Factors*. The article shows how it is not population density or low economic development in the West Indies that causes migration but rather the demand for workers in Britain. There is a "close relationship" between the demand for labour in the U.K. and West Indian immigration. Using the totals of unfilled vacancies for adult workers as an index of demand for labour, we get (p. 34):

YEAR	LABOUR DEMAND INDEX	ARRIVALS FROM WEST INDIES
1956	934,111	26,441
1957	725,271	22,473
1958	535,186	16,511
1959	653,120	20,397
1960	848,542	45,706

This Table shows that "the number of West Indian arrivals rose and fell in accordance with the demand for labour." The same goes for people returning. More go back when demand is slack than at other times. "Both in the movement into Britain and in the outward movement to the Caribbean, West Indian migrants have been largely governed by conditions in this country." The 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act upset the pattern by causing a rush to beat the ban in a time of slack demand. But now economic factors are beginning to take over again even under the system where migrants have to get a voucher first. The demand and use of these vouchers also fluctuates with conditions in Britain.

There is of course the danger that the existence of large-scale unemployment in places like Jamaica might give rise there to extremist movements which might succeed in over-

throwing a friendly government. But this does not necessarily lead to the loss of the labour reserves. Algerians still go to work in France and elsewhere; even the Yugoslav Government encourages emigration to West Germany. And the flow of refugees is not without its use, economic as well as political. Indeed for many years Capitalism in West Germany lived on refugees from the East.

This August the Labour Government announced tougher restrictions on immigration, mainly for political reasons such as the fear of social unrest and the loss of the racist vote. That this was done for political reasons is obvious since immigration would begin to fall off anyway when the expected slump in industrial production and employment materialises. However, this manoeuvre could easily backfire. What happens when Capitalism begins to expand again? There will be a demand for more workers who can only come from the traditional reserves. Whichever party is in power, and it may well be the Labour Party, will be faced with an awkward political decision. To prevent their entry and thus slow down the expansion or to let them in and face the charge of "bringing in the blacks." Such are the problems of administering Capitalism!

We see then that Capitalism's reserve army of unemployed is still as real as ever. Those who argue on the basis of employment conditions in Britain that Capitalism has abolished unemployment fail to realise that Capitalism is a world-wide economic system. Their argument is as invalid as would have been that of someone who in the 1930's used the employment statistics for the South East to prove that Capitalism had solved the unemployment problem. The plain fact of the matter is that Capitalism, as an international system, has not and cannot.

A.L.B.

LETTER: State Capitalism in Russia

From reading the national press it appears that the term "State Capitalist" will become an accepted phrase when applied, for example, to the contemporary Russian and Chinese economic systems. Am I justified in assuming that the SPGB were the first to apply the theory of State Capitalism to Soviet Russia in the 1920's? Can you tell me something about the origin of the term; e.g. where the credit lies for first developing this theory.

Coventry.

J.E.K.

Reply

The Socialist Party would not wish to claim what is not our due. As a matter of fact the Bolsheviks themselves were the first to apply the term "state capitalism" to Soviet Russia.

Lenin first used the term in 1918 to describe the only policy that a "proletarian state" could pursue in the circumstances. He took as his model the war-time system of controls which had been built up in Germany whereby the State assumed large powers to control capitalist industry in the

interests of the war effort. Lenin held that in Russia capitalist industry could be similarly controlled but in the interests of the mass of workers and peasants. He knew that Socialism was impossible in Russia because the economic basis for it, largescale social production, hardly existed. A policy of State Capitalism, or the development of the large-scale social production of capitalism under the control of the "proletarian state", was all that could be done. Lenin admitted this openly when introducing plans for the New Economic Policy in 1920. This policy of State Capitalism upset the more Utopian and simple elements among the Bolsheviks who both in 1918 and in 1920 denounced the "betrayal" and "retreat" which they claimed this policy represented.

Although this is open to debate, Lenin seems to have regarded the socialist aspect of Soviet Russia to lie not in the economic field but in the political, in the control of State power by the Bolshevik party, the "vanguard" of the working class. It is true however that on occasions he did refer to the "socialist industries" of Russia.

In the disputes in the Bolshevik party

which followed Lenin's death in 1924 this ambiguous position was used by both sides. At the XIVth Party Congress in December 1925 and in a book, *Leninism*, Zinoviev went so far as to claim that the nationalised industries in Russia were not socialist but were state capitalist; in other words that the workers who were employed in the State trusts were still exploited. Stalin opposed this insisting that these industries were socialist. Trotsky too rejected Zinoviev's views.

It can thus be seen that the term "state capitalism" was in frequent use, and not necessarily as a term of criticism, in the early discussions of the victorious Bolshevik party. After the final triumph of the group led by Stalin and the suppression of free discussion in the party altogether the term became unacceptable. In 1928 began the "era of socialist construction" ending in 1936 with the proclamation of "socialism" in Russia.

Dissident Bolsheviks of all kinds insisted on the "state capitalist" label against the claims of the Stalinist majority though the largest group of them, the Trotskyists, never did accept this argument. Trotsky held

The story behind Powell Duffryn

IN Regent Street, in the posh shopping area of London, is a shop called POWELL DUFFRYN. Now that nationalisation is once again a political issue it is not out of place to tell the story behind this name.

It begins in South Wales, where Powell Duffryn used to be one of the hated coal combines owning pits in the Red Rhondda valleys. Between the wars these coal combines, by their persistent attempts to worsen wages and working conditions and by their union-busting, aroused deep resentment among miners, many of whom devoted their time to campaigning for the nationalisation of the mines. And on January 1st, 1947 their aim was achieved. The mines were handed over to the National Coal Board; the NCB flag was raised amidst cheering and the singing of traditional Labour songs. Powell Duffryn was dead. Or was it?

As a side-line to mining, Powell Duffryn was also engaged in the making of heating equipment, boilers and radiators. This side of the business was not nationalised. In the years that followed, while the NCB languished, Powell Duffryn used its compensation and flourished. Today it has its shop in Regent Street; it co-operates closely with the nationalised fuel industries—the Gas Board and the NCB. Not long ago the papers carried a joint Powell Duffryn-NCB advert. All of this is a mockery of the devoted, if misguided, struggles of the miners to nationalise such outfits, and yet another monument to the futility of reformism.

It is worth spending some time looking into the concept of nationalisation a little more closely. In its modern sense, the term first appeared in 1869 when the telegraph system was nationalised, though for some time before the concept had gone under a different name. Some people had called for the nationalisation of land, and a clause in the 1844 Railway Act had allowed for the nationalisation of the railway system

if necessary. The word itself—nationalisation—gives a clue as to its significance. The dominant theories, popular and philosophical, of capitalism hold that the interests of all those who make up the entity variously called the "nation" or the "public", on the popular level, and "society" or "the community", in the textbooks of political philosophy, are one and the same.

This is a fraud. Present-day society is composed of two mutually antagonistic classes, between which there is a conflict over the distribution of the product of labour. The interests of these two classes are completely opposed; they have no interests in common. Once this is realised, it can be understood that "nation" and "public" are often little more than polite words for the owning class.

When the apologists of capitalism wish to refer to the situation which exists after the State has taken over a section of industry in the interests of the capitalist class as a whole, they sometimes call it "common ownership". This is how the phrase is used in the famous Clause IV of the Labour Party constitution in its reference to the "common ownership . . . of the means of exchange" (i.e. financial institutions). To talk of the common ownership of financial institutions is a contradiction in terms, the purest nonsense. But to those who use "common ownership" in its capitalist sense it makes sense. As has been well said, the Labour Party stands for "socialism for the capitalist class!"

The capitalist class has been prepared to consider nationalisation as a solution when their interests as a whole have differed from those of a section. This was the position with land in the nineteenth century. The landowners, by virtue of their monopoly position, were able to extract a portion of the proceeds of working class exploitation from the capitalist class. A similar fear that the railway companies

that the trouble was mainly political; the loss of political power by the working class to the bureaucracy represented by Stalin. This however did not alter the fact that the "socialist" basis of the economy still existed in the nationalised industries.

The Socialist Party operating in Britain faced a different situation. Many of the admirers of Soviet Russia in Britain were not equipped with the Marxian knowledge of men like Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev; they talked about "socialism" as if it already existed in Russia; all sorts of extravagant claims as to what the Bolsheviks had done or could do were made. In this situation the Socialist Party used its Marxian knowledge to bring home a few basic facts: Socialism was not possible in Russia; whatever the Bolsheviks could do to help the working class in Russia (and they did do something at least at the beginning) they could not introduce Socialism; neither the material (social production) nor the intellectual (a socialist working class) prerequisites of Socialism existed in Russia. Only Capitalism was possible.

The first reference to state capitalism

in our journal, the SOCIALIST STANDARD, was in July 1920 in a discussion of Lenin's pamphlet, *The Chief Task of Our Times*. Lenin's admission in this pamphlet that Socialism was a long way off in Russia and that the capitalist stage of economic development would have to come first in the form of State Capitalism was seen as a complete vindication of the position the Socialist Party had maintained from the beginning.

We also denied the claim of the Bolsheviks that they had established a "proletarian state" or a "socialist republic". Their rule was not, as they claimed, equivalent to that of the working class. The Bolshevik party was supported by only a minority of the working class, let alone of the population as a whole, and maintained itself in power by undemocratic means such as the suppression of other parties and their journals and the jailing of opponents; a fact which was to have a significant effect on the subsequent evolution of the regime in Russia.

From its foundation in 1904 the Socialist Party maintained that nationalised institutions like the Post Office were examples not of socialism but rather of state capitalism.

Thus we had no difficulty—or hesitation—in pointing out the state capitalist nature also of the nationalised industries in Russia. When in the 1930's this sector was greatly extended and the whole system labelled "socialism", our reply was to deny this and describe the whole system as "state capitalism".

Even if the Socialist Party was not the first to use the term we do feel that we deserve credit for developing a coherent theory of what was possible in Russia and for consistently standing by it—to be proved correct by events. In the 20's, 30's and 40's, despite the unpopularity of our position, we were the only organization in Britain to point out the real nature of what was called socialism in Russia. As such we became the scourge of the so-called Communist Party and its fellow travellers.

In recent years, it is true, the state capitalist designation has become more widely accepted but without any recognition of the pioneer work we have done in developing this theory or, unfortunately, any understanding of the lessons of what happened in Russia.

might exploit their monopoly position was responsible for the clause in the 1844 Act. In both cases nationalisation, or the assumption of ownership by the State on behalf of the rest of the ruling class, was considered. This had one drawback; it meant that the State had to assume the management of the estates or railways it might acquire.

Most capitalists were not prepared to put such power into the hands of their State officials. The institution of the public corporation was a solution to this problem. It removed the fear of the State becoming more and more powerful and eventually taking over other sections of industry as well. This fear was not groundless; there are historical examples of this happening, in Russia for instance. Here the capitalist class as well as the working class, such as they were, were subjected to a dictatorship of the State. The system remained capitalism however and it eventually evolved into a form of State capitalism.

Where such disputes break out between the capitalist class and usurping politicians or State officials, the workers are invited to take sides. But their interests are no more involved here than they were in the old landowner-capitalist struggle. Despite this, "Leftwingers" delight in backing the new usurpers against the capitalists; only to find that the usurpers end by establishing themselves as a new ruling class. So nationalisation without compensation is no more worthy of working class support than the more moderate means of nationalisation that have been applied in Britain.

With the public corporation the capitalist class felt less fear about nationalisation, so that in 1944 Herbert Morrison could declare that the Conservatives had introduced more "Socialism" than the Labour Party. The nationalisations of the post-war Labour Government however identified the Labour Party as the party of nationalisation.

Soon after 1945, a large section of the capitalist class were becoming dissatisfied with the efforts of the Labour Party on their behalf. They were becoming annoyed at having to pay taxes to prop up inefficient State-run industries. Not that they were completely opposed to all measures of State control; they just came round to the view that nationalisation was not a suitable means of such control. This is the crux of the argument about steel nationalisation.

The Iron and Steel industry has been subject to a substantial amount of State control since the 1930's. In 1951 it was nationalised but in the succeeding years the Conservative governments sold most of it back to the former owners. Ironically they could find no-one to buy Richard Thomas and Baldwin's which is still nationalised today. The plans recently announced by the Labour government provided for the sole shareholder of some 90 per cent of the industry to be a National Steel Corporation which can thus control the industry as it wants. The Conservatives and Liberals favour what they call a more competitive solution.

The compensation measures—since in Britain nationalisation amounts to a business deal in which the State buys out the old owners—have been described in avowedly capitalist papers as reasonable, fair and far better than expected. One referred to "jubilation in the City". It seems that some £660 million will have to be paid out. In present stock-market conditions much of the government stock which will be given as compensation could well be sold and the capital re-invested in more profitable fields.

This brings us back to Powell Duffryn. The same story will no doubt be repeated for the steel industry as for the coal industry and the others. We conclude by quoting from a recent survey of the State in industry in Britain:

Nationalisation deprived many companies of their assets but left them with huge sums in cash and stock for re-investment after compensating the former shareholders. The colliery companies alone received nearly £300 million from this source. Some companies became investment trusts; others took over and developed existing businesses or established new enterprises in fields where they could use their technical and managerial skill. Typical examples are Cable and Wireless (Holdings) Ltd.—now quite unconnected with the nationalised concern, Cable and Wireless Ltd.—which has invested its free money to build an interest in about 850 different companies; and Thomas Tilling (Holdings) which continues to manage the interests of the old Tilling Group that were not acquired by the British Transport Commission, and has used its compensation to acquire holdings in some twenty-five companies in industries ranging from light engineering to glass and plastics and from insurance to book publishing (*Government and Industry in Britain*, 1962, J. W. Grove, p. 250).

A.L.B.

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The advance of technology

THE last decade is noted for its achievements in science and technology. Our age is one of continuous discovery, yet the problems of humanity seem to be intractable. Technical advances are relative. The use of flaked flint tools by primitive man is no less spectacular than the building of nuclear reactors by present-day man. The beginning of language is no less momentous than communication by telstar satellite. Primitive man's innovations took tens of thousands of years to become perfected, today the momentum of technological and scientific advance is staggering.

Our age is dominated by savage contradictions. America and Russia may be on the brink of sending men to the moon, yet two-thirds of the world's inhabitants have not enough to eat. Scientists have the skill to dissect living cells 6/10,000ths of an inch in diameter, but disease is still a major human affliction. Despite international communication men are divided by nationalism and race prejudice. Illiteracy and ignorance abound; violence, competition and privilege are the keystones of the age. Workers fulfill economic functions that have no personal meaning, for them society is a prison house of economic servitude where hopes remain denied.

This then is the contradiction of today: In the field of science and technology men have asserted their genius more often than not towards anti-human ends; in the field of human relationships they have abysmally failed. Why?

Science serves the ends of the capitalist system. It serves the military might of nations. It serves industrial efficiency not by satisfying the community's needs, but by intensifying the exploitation of the working class. In dealing with today's problems so-called social science is fettered by the prejudices of private property. It refuses to recognise that the cause of these problems is capitalism itself. Under socialism science will serve the whole community.

Capitalism has almost engulfed the whole world. Every nation is involved in world trade and cannot escape the influence of international power politics, with its alliances and war preparations. Technical innovation goes on apace, augmenting military might, intensifying the labour process and maximising the exploitation of the worker. This drive for greater technical efficiency is basic to capitalism's insatiable thirst for profits; humanity's real needs are not considered. As commodity production spreads it diffuses its own

ideology and culture. Industrialisation destroys the village communities with their rich cultural traditions. People are concentrated into towns and are set to work in factories, clocking on, clocking off. TV, the cinema, pop music, suburbia and the "Jones", slums and overcrowding, are all features of what is becoming a universal way of life. And with all these go the so-called welfare and public services; "free" medicine, education, national assistance, etc.

Fifty years ago the British worker, the Chinese peasant and primitive African were living in different worlds. Today they live very similar lives. The same social problems are increasingly conditioning them. They are all cogs in the machinery of capitalism, and are exploited in the same way. Their diet and their language may be different, but the workers day-to-day material problems are essentially the same.

On the other hand, the tremendous development of the means of mass communication have made the world smaller. The worker is forced to widen his perspective. For the first time it becomes possible for him to communicate intelligibly with workers throughout the world. The Socialist demand for "one world, one people" becomes supported by the development of the productive forces of capitalism itself.

One may lament the break-up of the old local traditions, but capitalism has no time for sentiment when it devours technically backward communities, brutally converting them into commodity producers and reducing all values to money ones.

Seemingly, apart from Socialism, nothing can stop the further expansion of capitalism. It subjugates great numbers of people to wage slavery, but then it also destroys the worker's insularity, forcing upon him experiences and problems shared universally by the whole working class.

Our propaganda must show that these problems can be resolved by the working class uniting and working for Socialism. Under capitalism science and technology have flowered mainly to serve the interest of capitalist profit making. This is the great contradiction. Mankind has the know how, yet poverty, misery and the threat of war remain.

The barrier of private ownership must be destroyed, and the means of living (aided by science and technology) be used to satisfy the needs of mankind.

P.L.

"Visit a socialist country this year" continued from page 163

I have no intention of avoiding this question . . . but I must say quite frankly that our knowledge is not great enough to say anything in detail about such questions.

Within the rank and file of his party, however, opinions are expressed which—although they cannot be recommended as being any nearer to the socialist position than Ulbricht's—are, nevertheless, less bigoted. My most cherished memory of East Germany is of an argument with a member of the "Socialist Unity Party". Because of the strange ideas I

had been expressing, which he had evidently not bothered to listen to, he thought I must be a supporter of Mao tse-Tung and therefore launched into a violent attack on the Chinese leader. He ended by storming: "Mao tse-Tung is not a good communist!" I pointed out that surely Mao tse-Tung had been described as a great communist by Stalin and other leading communists in their day. Seeing his dilemma, he compromised: "Mao tse-Tung is a great communist but not a good communist".

J.C.

SWANSEA DISCUSSION

A successful discussion between members of the Swansea Young Socialists and the Swansea Branch was held on September 6th. Our comrade Ambridge opened the discussion and the Branch feel that this was a good propaganda occasion. The audience participation was keen and eager and the Branch are hoping for further discussions with other organisations during the forthcoming autumn season.

BOOK RECEIVED

THE STUDY OF AFRICA by Peter J. M. McEwan and Robert B. Sutcliffe, Methuen 42s.

Los Angeles erupts

For a few days the spotlight was switched from the ever present horror of Vietnam and focussed on the United States itself.

Los Angeles, that most modern of cities—if such an outdated word as city can be used to describe a sprawl of over 452 square miles—erupted into violence. In an orgy of looting, arson and killing the Negro population, so often the victims of mob violence, themselves became the mob. The savage details were too well reported to need repeating, but many thousands of troops were needed to crush what amounted to a rebellion. When it

was over, needless to say the Negroes were the worst-hit victims.

The suppression of the Negro, lasting for a hundred years after their "liberation," ranging from murder to petty discrimination, and running through all strata of society, has produced a distrust and hatred that will take a very long time to overcome. At every moment and in every possible way, the Negro is made to feel inferior.

Such a situation, and the fact that it could be changed, must lead to an explosion. Los Angeles has been a modern legend, that personifies the so-called affluent society, the world of mass-pro-

duced commodities in profusion. Brash and ugly, a mass of sprawling suburbs and six-lane freeways where public transport has practically disappeared, the Watts-Willowbrook area where the explosion occurred is known as the Black Ghetto. Can anything illustrate the plight of the American Negro more than the use of this medieval word to describe the conditions of workers in an ultra-modern city?

The riot was crushed, but as long as hatred between workers remains on such a scale and is added to the normal tensions and frustrations of capitalism, such eruptions will continue.

Priorities in Kashmir

How cruelly does capitalism itself expose the innocent delusions of its own supporters!

Consider the case of the host of organisations which collect charity with the professed object of lightening the enormous burden of hunger and destitution in the world.

These charities have an extensive library of photographs of pitiful children, swollen-bellied near skeletons. They campaign with pictures of refugees and victims of natural disasters. Many people find this appeal irresistible, and the money flows in.

India and Pakistan are among the favourite subjects for this sort of charity; both countries have literally millions of starving people, and the problem is periodically intensified by famine and calamities like floods and cyclones.

Yet among the indescribable suffering of their peoples, India and Pakistan can afford to go to war. What does this make of the appeal of the charities?

A few months ago these same two

countries were fighting over the Rann of Kutch. While this was going on a cyclone hit East Pakistan, killing thousands of people and making millions homeless. The Pakistani Forces could have been used for rescue and recovery work; they had the manpower and much of the needed equipment. But they could not be spared from the fighting.

This sort of inconsistency does not prevent the charity-mongers appealing for aid for India and Pakistan. What they overlook is that over the past few years aid has been pumped into those countries on a scale which mocks the charities' wildest dreams.

According to India's Information Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, Pakistan has received one and a half billion dollars worth of aid from the United States. Mrs. Gandhi also admitted to India having received "only" two million dollars' worth, but, of course, she did not mention the other aid, open and disguised, which her country has had from the other side in the Cold War.

The point is that the aid was not meant to feed starving people. It went into the two countries' military machines; Mrs. Gandhi has complained—and she may be right—that American equipment which was supposed to be directed against the Russians was in action in Kashmir.

The Indo-Pakistani conflict has highlighted one of capitalism's most blatant scandals. It defies all reason, all sense, all humanity, for the world to pour its resources into a massive destructive effort when there is so much to do in the way of feeding and protecting the human race.

This will not be altered as long as capitalism lasts. The war in Kashmir was only the latest example of capitalism's priorities, which have always counted human interests and comforts as of little importance.

To capitalism it is in the natural order of things that millions should starve and that a battle should rage all about them.

TUC through the hoop

What were trade unionists expected to make of this year's TUC, when its General Secretary one day argues in favour of a certain policy and the very next day describes that same policy as a "shabby compromise"?

Confusion is inevitable. The connections between the unions and the Labour Party were once supposed to benefit the unions, but they are being used against them.

It is now possible, for example, for a Minister of Labour to use his speech as

a fraternal delegate to declare that the time has come for the unions to accept legal restrictions on their freedom to negotiate. It is possible for General Secretary George Woodcock disconsolately to argue in favour of his "shabby compromise," of forcing individual unions to refer their wage claims to the TUC for vetting, because this was their only hope of avoiding legislation to force them to refer their claims to a Government board.

The unions still seem determined to

support the Labour Government, although its professed policy is, as Woodcock put it, to "... put some restraint on the growth of incomes"—a policy which Minister of Labour Gunter justified because without it "We shall fail to hold our place in a fiercely competitive world."

The Labour Government is, in other words, rallying the TUC in support of its efforts to salvage the international trade of the British capitalist class. This was also the aim of past Conservative

NEWS IN REVIEW

Governments, but they were never able to persuade the unions to jump through the hoop so easily. It is worthwhile to ponder how the TUC, and the Labour Party, would have reacted had it been a Tory Government which was threatening to take legal powers to restrain wage claims.

How Mr. Wilson would have thundered his denunciations of dictatorship from the grouse moors! What depths of cliché-ridden oratory Mr. Gunter would have reached! What a riotous assembly

this year's TUC would have been!

But it is a Labour Government which is now moving towards a clash with the unions. These regular, hysterical denunciations of strikes and wage claims are coming from the mouths of Labour Ministers. And this policy—much tougher than the Tories ever tried—is justified with the last-ditch argument that whatever a Labour Government may do they are better than the Conservatives. This argument, which, in fact, allows the Government to get away with anything,

is of course quite unsupported by any evidence.

But it is an argument which we are probably going to hear a lot more of. Woodcock himself said that prices and incomes have actually gone up more since the Labour Government started trying to keep them down than they did before.

The unions may be like David Low's famous carthorse—slow, patient, even a little stupid. But they have thrown a few riders in the past and they will do so again.

Recession?

The Labour Government are going one better than keeping their election promises by claiming that they are giving us something which was not in their programme last October.

They did not promise that within a year of their winning the election we would be in an economic recession, with many industries on short time and the prospect of more to come.

Some of the firms on short time—for example, Ford and Hoover—as well as many City Editors, blamed the recession on to Government policy. While this may be a convenient explanation, it ignores certain facts of capitalist life.

Slumps, like booms, happen when conditions are ripe for them. A big boom overrides any attempt at official control and a slump does not respond to

Governmental efforts at revival.

Juggling with interest rates and restricting credit are not policies which fashion events, but largely reactions to those events. British capitalism is not alone in its present difficulties; many other countries are also experiencing them, which indicates that the recession may get deeper yet.

But if we accept the Government's claim that the closing down of the economy is all their own work, there is a massively awkward question for them to answer.

What happens, in a slump, to their vision of an automated Britain? They came to power on a promise to build a British industry humming with the very latest and most expensive computers and automatic production equipment.

They spoke (in fact they still speak) of a Britain in the forefront of the technological age, driving for its markets under the impetus of massive investment and a fearless determination to innovate.

But in a time of recession industry is definitely not interested in investing in expensive equipment designed to make more of the very things which, because of the slump, cannot be sold. At such times industry is not inclined to innovate; it tends to pull in its horns and to wait for the danger to pass.

Wilson's Britain of scientists and technologists was, in fact, one of Labour's more horrible ideas. There need be no regrets that it has joined the long list of pledges, given solemnly but now forgotten, knowing no grave but their own inconsistency.

Things to come

Time, as they never tire of telling us, marches on.

The first men to fly were famous for their daring; the aeroplane was a glamorous marvel of the Edwardian age.

But the First World War showed that the sky was a battlefield, into which each side sent its balloons and aircraft to observe the enemy and to direct artillery fire.

It was not long before other aircraft were developed, to shoot down the observers. Then others were sent up to protect the balloons from attack, and later came the fighters and the bombing plane to improve on the artillery shell.

This was the birth of the military aeroplane. The sky is now becoming outdated as a battlefield; the daring

young men of the future will probably fight it out in space.

The two Cosmic powers—Russia and the United States—now make no secret of the uses to which their space ventures are being put. Both countries admit that they have observer satellites aloft and America plans to send up a space laboratory to carry out experiments in what they call defence.

The nature of these experiments is not, of course, known but it seems that we are witnessing the opening of another battlefield.

The next step could be a space ship designed to knock out the observer satellites, then another to prevent them being attacked—and then perhaps dog-fights in space.

There is nothing fanciful in this. The military possibilities of space flights have always been obvious and there was never any cause to believe that they would be ignored in capitalism's constant arms race.

This may rub some of the glamour off the astronauts, which will not be recovered by blatant propaganda dodges like President Johnson's proposal to send them on world-wide goodwill tours. There is no goodwill in planning to destroy millions of people.

Space war adds another dimension to capitalism's terrors. It is not a pleasant prospect, but nobody should be surprised that once again society's resources, and the courage and skill of its people, are being perverted.

The passing show

Peace and Quiet

"London Stinks," rapped out the young girl to her friend, sitting near me in the bus, one evening. Figuratively or literally, I couldn't help thinking of the undoubted truth of her words.

Working for my wage packet in the outskirts not far from London Airport, the high summer season has brought the noise of passing aircraft — over 60 of them every hour—to a hideous and almost unbearable pitch. At times the scream of one jet has not had time to die away before its place is taken by another coming in to land or taking off. And so it goes on throughout the working day and far into the night. Of course, you can cut down the noise a little by closing the windows—too bad then if it's a hot and stuffy day.

Just down the road the rush-hour traffic problem has reached immense proportions, and the noise, fumes and stink are a veritable assault on the senses. Even out of the rush hour conditions are not easy, and you very often take your life in your hands just to venture across the road. Pity, too, those who have the misfortune to live by the new M.4 flyover which has sliced its way across the Great West Road and jumps over factories and houses alike. For these unfortunates it has happened with bewildering speed, this steel and concrete monster, the backcloth to their drab houses huddled together on a pre-war council estate.

Doctors agree that the modern noise problem has had effects on health, and the Government, with tongue in cheek, tut-tuts in agreement. There was even the passing of a Noise Abatement Act—a private Member's Bill—about five years ago, much to the joy of The Noise Abatement Society. But its provisions were concerned with acts of nuisance between individuals, and the really big culprits of road and air noise were left unscathed. In fact, the Society's secretary confessed his sadness at the remarks of the (then) Aviation Minister, Peter Thorneycroft that:—

he agreed with Lord Douglas that money is more important than the sufferings of people, and would add that so also was the progress of aviation.

(Q.P.—Society's Journal, January, 1961).

Not the sort of answer to surprise Socialists, although the secretary seems to have been caught off balance by it. However, this did not stop the editorial page from claiming:—

the undemocratic Civil Aviation Act of 1947 forbids action against owners of noisy aircraft, but public clamour is such that its repeal cannot long be delayed.

That was more than four years ago and the clamour seems to have been drowned in the much greater and ever increasing din. Is it not surprising then to see a letter to *The Guardian* of August 19th by the Society's chairman in similar vein and with even bolder (and wilder) prophecy thus:—

We aim to get this undemocratic Act repealed, but meanwhile the volume of protest is growing to such proportions that both politicians and civil servants are looking to their defences, and we would not be at all surprised to learn that . . . work is to commence on the new London Airport designed by the Society's architect friends to cause no noise nuisance.

Hope, it seems, springs eternal in the reformer's breast, despite the unpleasant facts of capitalist life. So let me spell out one or two simple home truths for the benefit of this and other organisations. First of all, the noise nuisance bears most heavily on the working class—we have no alternative to putting up with the racket, not being able to pop off to a secluded country mansion when we feel like it. And if recent signs are anything to go by, there's a whole lot more to come.

The truth is contained in Thorneycroft's brazenly outspoken words. That is why any Government will only try to tackle the problem if there is the prospect of a cheap solution or if the trouble has reached such proportions that it is adversely affecting the interests of the capitalist class as a whole, or a sufficiently important section of them. Until then, they couldn't care less.

By Way of Post Script

The Guardian of August 17th reports that work on the construction of a new deep water berth at Aberdeen Harbour was stopped so that the Queen could sleep undisturbed. Said one workman: "There was a whine from a derrick and it might have been noisy if they were not used to it." No comment.

Wages?

I was tickled pink by this title to an advert in the national press a short while ago. Maybe you saw it, too. There's this photograph of a comely young man,

obviously a newcomer to the firm, looking expectantly at an older man (obviously not a newcomer), and when we get our look in, the question has already been popped.

"Wages?" repeats the older man, rolling the word round his mouth while he thinks of an answer to head the other off. Then at last, "We pay ours by credit transfer." And that is that. There follows a blurb about the advantages of wages and salaries being paid through the bank, including the very attractive one of huge savings in clerical time, which in turn means cost reductions for the employer.

A clever enough advert really, starting off with the word to make any worker look twice, then switching quickly to the punch line (pity they didn't show a close-up then of the young man's face) with particular appeal to your boss but not forgetting to remind you that "it means less likelihood of loss." You can, of course, lose the money after you've drawn it from the bank, but we'll not quibble over such a small detail as that.

Now I have an interest in the wages question for the simple reason that I am cursed with the fate of having to work for them to get a living. I'm also aware that more employers are turning to paying wages by cheque or by direct credit transfer for the reasons already mentioned and to avoid the risk of pay snatches, which our advert modestly calls "the hazard of moving large sums of cash." My firm introduced the system over six years ago amidst a flurry of mixed consternation and excitement among the office workers.

But it's all settled down now. We get paid monthly instead of weekly, and perhaps the only change is that some of us are broke for four days at the end of the month instead of for one day at the end of each week. Maybe some found it a bit precarious at first when they had no spare money to tide them over to the first monthly pay day, but these troubles have long been forgotten, and the pay slip is awaited as eagerly as the old pay packet used to be.

There were some who hinted darkly that the whole thing was a swindle, but of course there was no evidence for this. When the dust of argument finally settled, even the dimmest could see that we were no better or worse off than before. There was a swindle there somewhere, of course, but as usual they didn't spot it. It lies not in the particular arrangement of wage payment but in the very wages system itself. And the swindle is per-

petrated every second of our working day. For no matter what the size of our wage packet (oops, sorry, Pay Slip) it represents a value smaller than the goods we produce and the services we render. There lies the secret of our employer's riches and of our poverty.

So don't waste time quibbling over the details of the swindle's administration, but work to end it by establishing a moneyless, wageless world of common

ownership. But don't bother your boss with this argument especially in working time—he's not likely to appreciate the point.

Gaspers

"Equality in health is a practical impossibility. The Duke or Member of Parliament will always insist on better attention than the dustman." (Conservative Party Monday Club Research Group, 2.9.65.)

"Visit a socialist country this year"

"Visit a socialist country this year," said the advertisement. The result of reading this was that one dreary Sunday morning several months later I found myself in the centre of Karl Marx Stadt, in the middle of a vast crowd, listening to a speech by Walter Ulbricht—First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party, and Chairman of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic.

The "Socialist Unity Party" was formed by the union of the "Communist" Party and the Social Democratic Party in the Eastern sector of Germany on 21st April, 1946. Here, then, was the "socialism" of East Germany plain for all to see. The country's leading party proclaimed itself a "socialist" party, the town of Chemnitz had been renamed after the socialist pioneer Marx, and—to clear up any remaining doubts—the official travel guide (VEB edition, Leipzig 1962) announced, in terms that brooked no argument: "The German Democratic Republic is a socialist state."

Ulbricht was addressing an international rally of pioneers—the youth organisations of the East European countries. Following his speech the children were marshalled and then followed a massive parade of the marching pioneers in their thousands, complete with uniforms, banners and martial music. It was certainly an impressive spectacle and, for sheer military precision, it must surely have equalled anything the Hitler Youth could have achieved. The party of Young Communist League members, with whom I was travelling, was wild with enthusiasm and evidently could see no contradiction

between the sight of these herded and dragooned youngsters yelling their slogans in carefully rehearsed unison and the professed socialist nature of the organisations to which they belonged.

The Socialist Unity Party officials were continually bringing to our attention aspects of their country which, they contended, illustrated its "socialist" nature. A favourite example was the national health service. Yet Otto Lehmann—director of the East German social insurance service—has some interesting revelations to make on this subject:

But there are also hidden reserves of labour power which can be tapped by improving workers' health and living conditions . . . Herr Lehmann described how effective measures of this kind can be. In the Nünchritz chemical factory, for example, labour productivity and output were doubled and profits increased by 400 per cent between 1958 and 1963, while the sickness rate fell from 5.56 per cent to 4.81 per cent . . . These good results can be traced quite clearly to better working conditions and preventive health measures . . . (*Democratic German Report*, February 19th, 1965).

This is reminiscent of nothing so much as Sir John Anderson speaking in the House of Commons and saying:

On a long view the improved standard of health and education resulting from the development of the social services ought to increase enormously our productive efficiency as a community. (Our italics. *Hansard*, 11th April, 1949).

How can it be that in "socialist" East Germany and capitalist Great Britain the national health services can find such identical justification? Yet this muddled

"Coal is money, and if men don't turn up and don't produce it, then there is no money." (NCB Chairman Lord Robens, 2.9.65.)

"If the voluntary system fails, we might have to provide for statutory reference of every claim above the norm to go to an expanded and strengthened Prices and Incomes Board . . ." (The Prime Minister, 2.8.65.)

"Companies exist to produce goods and make profits . . ." (*Daily Express* Editorial, 23.8.65.)

E.T.C.

thinking on the part of the membership of the "Socialist Unity Party" is less surprising when some of the profundities of its leader are examined. Walter Ulbricht can hardly be recommended as a beacon of socialist understanding. For example, he advises how socialism may be achieved "in some countries":

. . . the question can be examined as to whether the workers in some countries may not be able, under capitalist conditions, to use their political and economic struggle in order to reduce the power of the great monopolies, and later to "buy them out".

Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx had considered this not only possible, but under certain conditions possibly the "cheapest way" of establishing socialism(!), Walter Ulbricht recalled. (Our emphasis. Democratic German Report, October 16th, 1964).

So there we have it, comrades; First Secretary Ulbricht (in the name of Marx and Engels) points the way to cut-price socialism.

However, the visit to East Germany was certainly not without value. For example, I learnt that by 1980 the wages system will definitely be abolished in the U.S.S.R.; or, at least, so one earnest young "communist" assured me. But, without a shadow of doubt, the burning question of the day in the "communist" world at present is nothing so mundane as the abolition of wage labour but, instead, the Sino-Soviet dispute. Ulbricht has clearly demonstrated his own discomfort on this issue. At a meeting in the *Schwarze Pumpe* coal combine on November 3rd, 1964 he stated in reply to questions about relations with China:

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Meetings

GLASGOW

Woodside Public Halls
Sundays, 7.30pm

October 3rd

SOCIALISM IS INTERNATIONAL
Speaker: V. Vanni

October 10th

REFORM OR REVOLUTION?
Speaker: R. Donnelly

October 17th

MUST THERE BE WAR?
Speaker: C. McEwen

October 24th

THE ROOTS OF RACIALISM
Speaker: R. Russell

October 31st

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
Speaker: A. Webster

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE

The Royal Oak, York Street, W1
(near Marylebone Road)
Wednesdays, 9 pm

October 6th

WOMEN AND SOCIETY
Speaker: K. Graham

October 20th

October 27th
November 3rd

**A series of 3 lectures on the
ENGLISH CIVIL WAR and the
GROWTH OF PARLIAMENT**
Lecturer: L. Dale

OXFORD

Martyrs Memorial, St. Giles
Sundays at 8 pm

STEVENAGE

Clock Town Square, New Town
Saturdays, 3 pm

BRIGHTON

The Fishmarket
Sundays, 3 pm

LONDON

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 and 6 pm
East Street, Walworth (noon)

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Wednesdays

Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers Street) 8 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm
Earls Court, 8 pm
Bromley Library, 8.30 pm

AUTUMN DELEGATE MEETING at Head Office

52 Clapham High St., London, SW4
Saturday, 16th October, 2-6 pm
Sunday, 17th October, 11 am-6 pm

STEVENAGE

Red Lion, High Street, Old Town
Monday, 4th October, 8 pm

MY VISIT TO RUSSIA

Speaker: D. Hidson

Monday, 18th October, 8 pm

DOES LABOUR GOVERN?

Speaker: D. Zucconi

WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane
Monday, 25th October, 8 pm

HUMAN FINERY

Speaker: A. Young

KIDDERMINSTER

Station Inn, Farfield, Comberton Rd.
Wednesday, 13th October, 7.30 pm

MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

Open discussion

MANCHESTER

International Centre, George St.
Friday, 29th October, 7.30 pm

DOES LABOUR GOVERN?

Speaker: D. Zucconi

Socialists and Religion

The spectacle of the warring nations of Europe supplicating the same good and almighty god for armed victory over each other is ludicrous enough. Small wonder that it is subject for derision.

Moreover, practically every religious sect has hastened to put its private brand of almighty power at the service of the capitalist interests which are responsible for the modern machine-made murder . . .

Nevertheless the power of religion to keep the workers servile is fast waning. Technical progress, the advance of knowledge, the march of events, drive it continually farther from real life. True it is that religion cannot entirely disappear until man's relations with his fellows and with nature become clear, ordered, rational and unambiguous. True it is that man's emancipation from wage-slavery, from irrational poverty and ignorance will alone finally lay the ghost of superstition. Yet the present fading of religion is an unmixed good. The power of religion has ever been potent for evil. It has been throughout political history the abetter of oppression, the enemy of freedom, of science and of humanity. It is still used as far as practicable as the hand-maiden of class domination.

As Socialists, indeed, our main attack must be against the entrenched political power of capitalism, and to this all else must be subordinated; but the war on religion, which is the power of inertia of human development, is part of the work that must be done in that great struggle.

From the SOCIALIST STANDARD October 1915.

CENTRAL LONDON

Asquith Room, 2 Soho Square, W1

First of the new series of Sunday meetings commences on October 24th at 8 pm (doors open 7.30 pm)

AFTER 12 MONTHS HARD LABOUR—WHAT NEXT?

Speaker: R. Critchfield

October 31st

APARTHEID IN PERSPECTIVE

Speaker: P. Laurence

November 7th

RECENT POLITICAL CHANGES IN FRANCE

Speaker: A. Buick

HACKNEY

Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St., E9
(facing Hackney Empire)
Wednesdays, 8.30 pm

October 13th

MARXISM

Speaker: S. Goldstein

October 27th

MERCHANTS OF DEATH

Speaker: J. Carter

ISLINGTON

Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Rd., N7
Thursday, October 28th, 8 pm

Prof. Julian Newman, a speaker from the Humanist Association, will address the Branch on: **CAN A HUMANIST BE A SOCIALIST?**

WEST LONDON

Fridays, 8 pm
Westcott Lodge Lower Mall,
Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway)

1st October

MARX & THE INCOMES POLICY

Speaker: E. Hardy

8th October

FILM

19th November

TAPE "ROBBIE BURNS"

with discussion opened by member

26th November

JACK LONDON

Speaker: J. Donaldson

HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL (Small Hall)

Wednesday, 20th October, 8 pm

LABOUR FAILS AGAIN

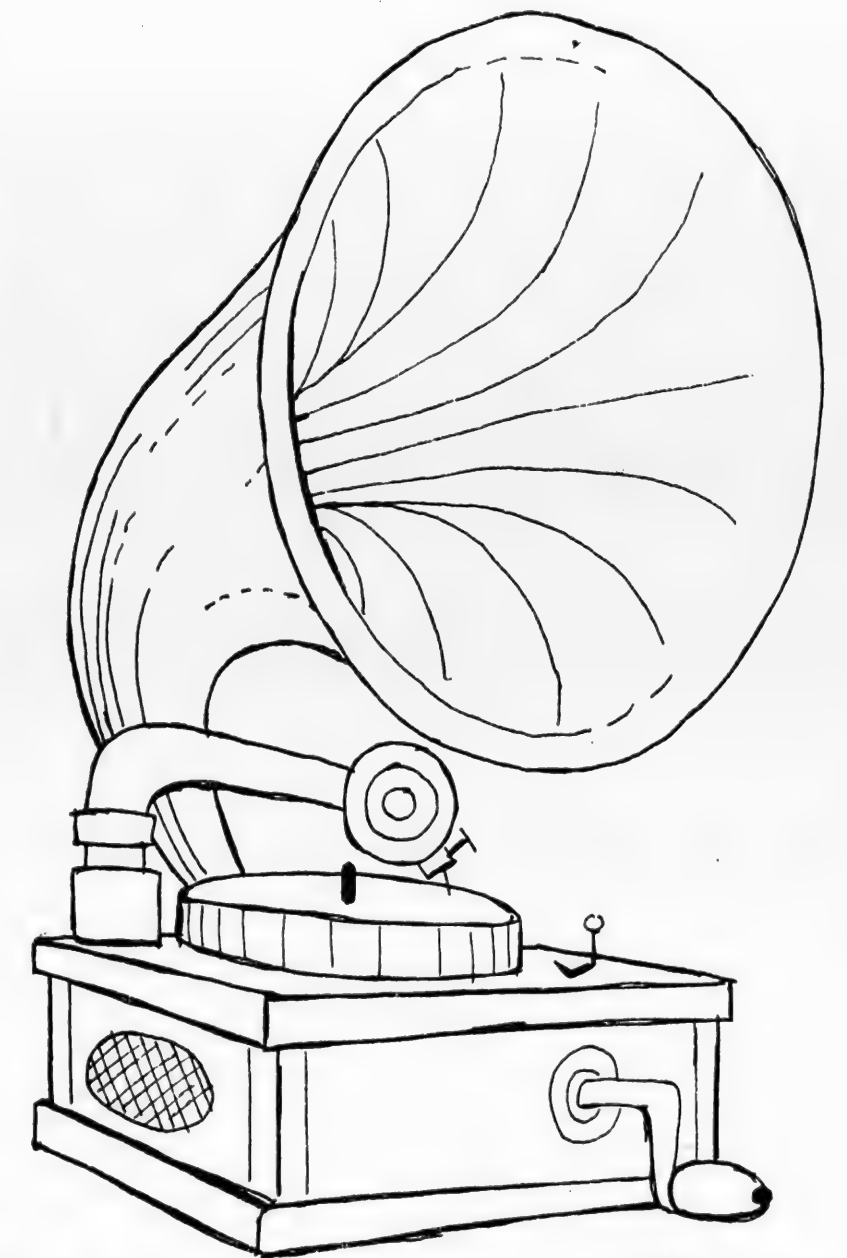
Speaker: H. Baldwin

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Socialist Standard

Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland

Same
old
story



The Tories new policy

NOVEMBER 1965 | 6d

visitors are cordially invited to every meeting

SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (4th and 18th Nov.) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 5th Nov. at 7 Cyril Road, Bexleyheath and 19th Nov. at 32 Ickleton Road, Nottingham, SE9. Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 37 Bellatone Street, Glasgow, C3.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KENSINGTON Fridays 8 pm, 55 Meadvale Road, Ealing, W5. (temporarily). Correspondence: R. Cain, 35 Walham Road, Southall, Middlesex.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Nelson, above address.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

KIDDERMINSTER Enquiries: J. Amos, 31 Sion Hill, Broadwaters. Meets 2nd Wednesday in month at 7.30 pm, Station Inn, Farfield, Comberton Road, Kidderminster.

For information

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

MID HERTS Meets 1st and 3rd Monday in month at The Red Lion, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd and 4th Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel.: Hatfield 4802.

NOTTINGHAM 1st Sunday in month (7th Nov.) at 2.30 pm in the Committee Room, Co-operative Hall, Heathcoat Street, Nottingham. Enquiries: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive, Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE Wednesday 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX 1st and 3rd Thursdays (4th and 18th Nov.) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (8th and 22nd Nov.) 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowd, Llanyfelach, Swansea.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (11th and 25th Nov.) in month, 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Fridays (12th and 26th Nov.) in month, 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

MANCHESTER Meets last Friday in month at 7.30 pm, The International Centre, George Street. Enquiries: A. Atkinson, 4 St. Martins Road, Ashton on Mersey, Sale, Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

SUNDERLAND Enquiries P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham. Meets 1st Sunday in month, 8 pm, Crown & Thistle, High St., W.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

November 1965 Vol 61 No 735

Socialist Standard

Journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the World Socialist Party of Ireland



Same old story

The Conservative Party's new declaration of policy is a misnomer. There is nothing *really* new about it and perhaps that is why it sputtered like a damp squib, instead of bursting like a bombshell over the political scene as we had been led to expect. It was to have been *the* alternative to the Labour Government, but having read its text, you are inclined to wonder just what all the hurry and fuss was for.

In launching the statement on October 6th, Tory leader Edward Heath was anxious to wipe the slate clean as far as the past record of his party was concerned—as *The Guardian* put it: "to waste no time in explaining differences between the new statement and (their) party's manifesto at the last election." Indeed, this was to be an exciting break with yesterday and a forward look to a really different future.

The statement certainly makes plenty of promises, even though Mr. Heath admits that work on parts of it is still not complete, and in this of course, it does not differ from any of the other capitalist parties. Promises are the one thing we get plenty of—precious little else. But the policy itself bears close resemblance to that of the present Labour Government and this need cause us no surprise, since the needs of capitalism are the same, whichever party is in power. For all the window dressing the differences between them are of detail only and not fundamental. Rent control, land, payroll and corporation taxes, curbing of the trade unions, are just a part of the total area of agreement which the Tories have with their Labour opponents.

Assuming that the future Tory election manifesto runs along the lines of this statement, it will make no worthwhile difference to the lives of working men and women, yet it is they who will be voting for it in their millions when the time comes; which illustrates the tragic irony of working class acceptance of capitalism. Tragic because of the misery it brings them every day of their lives; ironic because the vote for which they fought so bitterly in the past they are using to keep the shackles of wage slavery firmly about their ankles.

By means of the vote, workers have it in their power to capture Parliament with a Socialist majority, and end once and for all the system which subjects and degrades them. Parliament is the place where power resides, where the state machine and its coercive forces are controlled, and the laws passed which are aimed at the smooth running of capitalism's everyday affairs. Although there may be a lot of hot air there at times, Parliament is no mere gas house. It is a power station, the more so because those who go there are sent by the majority of the population—the working class. Is it any wonder then, that the parties of capitalism are so full of promises? They at least know how important the vote is to their interests; what a pity the same cannot be said of the workers.

In their ignorance and confusion about the world in which they live, they switch their support from one party to the other, in the pathetic belief that they are fundamentally different from each other and that one will succeed in solving their problems where its predecessor has failed. And this is no mere trial and error process, but the persistent mental floundering of the working class, persistent that is, until they learn about Socialism. That is why, despite the black record of the parties in Parliament today, the political swings from one side to the other, and whoever is out, capitalism is always in.

The vote is a very powerful weapon. Used for the correct purposes, it could gain political power for a majority of class conscious workers to establish a world of common ownership and democratic control. But that would be an action based on mass knowledge and understanding of Socialist principles, and unfortunately it looks as if the workers have a lot to learn before that happy day. The very existence of the Labour and Tory parties is proof of it.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

Confusion on the left

IN his time, Mr. Harold Wilson has been cast in many roles. One of the latest, as this year's Labour Party Conference made clear, is that of the master surgeon who, by skilful use of anaesthetic and scalpel, has amputated the Party's Left Wing.

The operation has left a stump, which will probably grow and once again become a seat of infection. But for the moment all is as Mr. Wilson intended; what there is of the stump is a feeble thing—indeed, some of the observers at the operation were not even sure of where to look for it—and the patient is just becoming to come round.

It is, as well it may, before we go any further, we try to be clear about what we mean by Left Wing. First, let us say that the term has no real validity, in the sense that it does not describe a particular, permanent political viewpoint. Some politicians are said to be "left wing" on some issues and "right wing" on others. Even the Conservative Party is supposed to have members who are "left wing"—for example, Sir Edward Boyle. It is apparent that, although it is an expression which is in constant use, nobody is very anxious to pin down the meaning of "Left Wing" in a definition.

At the same time, we all know that there is a section of the Labour Party which is always nagging about banning the Bomb, or raising pensions, or getting out of Vietnam, or getting into the Congo. At any and every time, this section is in a ferment of protest—demonstrating, marching, resolving, even resigning. Sometimes, under the lash of Labour's Right Wingers, they are called rebels, or other less complimentary things. Usually, and conveniently, they are called the Left Wing, and for the purposes of this discussion we may as well accept the term, although we recognise its drawbacks.

The Left Wing claim that the Labour Party's rank and file are behind them and, if we take the annual vote of the constituency parties for members of the National Executive as our only guide, this claim is true. In their eagerness to return Left Wingers to the Executive, the constituency parties have sometimes bruised the ego of Labour's famous leaders. The late Lord Morrison was one who was spurned in this way, and he neither forgot nor forgave.

It is not, however, true that the constituency vote always goes left. This year, for example, a majority of it apparently supported the Government's prices and incomes policy, when it was under fire from the Left. The constituency vote for the Left Wingers is a different matter; they vote for them because they regard them as men of honour and principle, who will keep what they think of as the ideals of the Labour Party unsullied.

Perhaps they never reflect upon what happened to the famous Left Wingers in the past. There was Stafford Cripps, once the hottest of firebrands, who switched so smartly from Left to Right when the call came. There have been others who have committed themselves behind the scenes to supporting the policies they once attacked, and who have announced this to their astounded followers, as Aneurin Bevan did over the Bomb at Brighton in 1957. And there have been others who have simply joined up and shut up—taken jobs in the Government and sat mute while their followers of yesterday have thundered their protests. This year, for example, the constituency parties elected Barbara Castle, Anthony Greenwood and Richard Crossman to the Executive—all of them Left Wing rebels of the past, all of them now members of a

Government which infuriates the Left.

It is clear that the Labour Party are still under the ether which was administered to them in October last year. Everything about the 1965 conference—the "composition" of hostile resolutions, the prominence given to Ministers, the hero-worship of the Government, the rough handling which the delegates got from chairman Mr. Gunter—showed how stupid the Labour Party has now become. What remains of the Left is leaderless. Even Michael Foot, once the busiest of rebels, was silent; "... no Left-winger," wrote Anthony Howard of him in the *Sunday Times*, "Has defended the Government more loyally." To this point we shall return.

The lack of leadership is a serious matter for the Left Wing, because if there is one thing they love it is a leader. The sort of man who can rouse the annual *Tribune* rally, with a speech of mixed hypocrisy and nostalgia is an absolute essential to them. They must have fiery speeches full of demands which the speakers (and perhaps a large part of the audience) know have not the faintest chance of becoming reality. Take away their leaders and the Left is lost. That is what Harold Wilson has done. Indeed, he has taken away the greatest hope the Left has had for a long time; himself. For he once encouraged the rebels in the Labour Party to regard him as their leader (at the same time, of course, as he did as little as possible to discourage the Right Wing from regarding him as *their* leader). Perhaps this is why the Left are in such a fury over Vietnam, the Bomb and the other issues on which the Labour Government have disappointed them.

It would be an interesting exercise were the Left to ask themselves why they are always being betrayed in this way. Much of what they demand sounds sensible enough. Who *doesn't* want the war in Vietnam to end? Who *doesn't* want to scrap nuclear weapons? Who *doesn't* want better pay and working conditions? It is easy enough for a politician or a rebel to give voice to these demands. The big snag is that they are difficult, not to say impossible, to obtain under capitalism. That is why, if a Left Winger gets a job in the Government he always seems to be able to forget the heady days of rebellion and get down to the job of running the system. Conscientious objectors become Ministers of War (like Mr. Shinwell), trade unionists go to the Ministry of Labour (like Ernie Bevin). The Left Wing, betrayed again, has to look around for new leaders.

What do the realities of capitalism make of the Left Wing's policies? What about Vietnam? The Americans are fighting there not in the interests of the Vietnamese people, but to protect the substantial military and economic interests which they have in the area. Ever since the defeat of Japan, Washington has been determined that only one power should control the Far East. Any challenge to American domination there must provoke the same result, as we saw in Korea and as we are seeing now in Vietnam. The results are unpleasant, but inevitable.

By the same token, nuclear weapons are essential to capitalism in the Sixties. The disputes which capitalism throws up require every competing nation to be in readiness for war, and the wider a country's interests and its domination, the more frightening its preparation will be. It is thus no coincidence that the United States and the Soviet Union have the world's most advanced and destructive weapons. The results, again, are unpleasant—but nobody has yet been able to put a stop to capitalism's arms race.

Nobody, either, has been able to put a stop to the persistent battle between workers and employers over wages and working conditions. The fact that the majority of capitalism's people have to work for wages in order to live means that they will always have to struggle to get the highest wages possible, and to protect their other conditions. Governments may do their utmost to control the situation, with legislation and appeals, but the conflict will go on and the results of it, although not as spectacular as those of a war, are unpleasant enough.

The frictions and the malaises of capitalism are an unavoidable product of the system. The Left Wing does not recognise this—they live under the delusion that a Labour Government, suitably purged and reformed, could run capitalism without war, without strikes, without poverty. None of them has ever shown how this could be done, and the evidence says that it cannot be done. The evidence is there, in the records of the Labour Governments and it is there in the persons of people like Michael Foot and Barbara Castle, who loyally support a Government which on most issues is indistinguishable from the Tories they have castigated for so long.

We said we would return to the matter of loyalty. Where, we may wonder, will the loyalty of the Foots and the Castles lead them? Labour is their Government, right or wrong, but how much wrong are they prepared to accept? Will trade unionists in the Government stomach all and every attempt at imposing the Early Warning system on wages? Will Ministers who in the past spoke out against racial intolerance stay silent while the colour bar on immigration gets stronger, and while Labour panders more and more to the racist vote? Will those, like Anthony Greenwood, who once marched from Aldermaston, be at Mr. Wilson's side if he ever has to press the button? Loyalty to a government can cover a multitude of sins, and there is no reason to suppose that loyal Labour men will abandon their Party, no matter what it does. As Woodrow Wyatt (no Left Winger, of course) put it: "It is when we are wrong that we need the backing." Perhaps this means that the louder the appeals for backing,

the more the Labour Party realise they are wrong.

If the Left Wing are confused, and often hypocritical, they are only one group among many. Their faults are typical of all the other organisations which support the social system which breeds confusion and thrives on hypocrisy. In the so-called Age of Enlightenment the need for the facts to be stated clearly is as great as ever. Capitalism is a social system which by its very nature produces a host of anti-social problems such as war, poverty and clashes of interests. Any government trying to run capitalism will come up against these problems and in the end will have to run the system in the interests of its ruling class. No government can let wages run riot, or willingly surrender a position of power and influence in the world. These are the realities, distinct from the dreams of the Left. When the Labour Party come to power, they do so on a promise to reform capitalism, to be different, to be more humane and efficient. But they, too, have to run the system as it demands. As Labour forgets many of its promises, as it does many things which it once swore never to do, it disappoints and outrages its own supporters. For comfort, and as a way of assuring themselves that there is nothing basically wrong with the Labour Party and that somehow, somewhere, it can be changed, they cluster around the Left Wing.

But they will find no peace. In some ways they are useful to the Labour Party. Apart from the fact that Left Wingers are often among the most zealous of party workers, they also keep the Labour Party in touch with its past and the romance of its pioneers. It gives the active members the chance of having a good, old-fashioned demonstration once in a while, when they can almost hear again the cries of the victims of Peterloo. The Left Wing gives the Labour Party a certain standing among workers who sincerely want a better world to live in.

And perhaps—and this is its greatest condemnation—the Left helps to convince people that the Labour Party is not the cynical, vote-grabbing machine of capitalism that it actually is.

IVAN

What's happening in China

THE so-called communist rulers of China are in trouble. They are trying to achieve two impossible feats; to make exploitation popular with the Chinese workers and to kid them along that the form of capitalism which is developing there is socialism.

The latest campaign to accomplish this is called the "Socialist Education Campaign", now in full swing, which was recently commended by the Chinese premier as being "of great revolutionary and historical significance". Such campaigns are no novelty in "communist" China, where the workers seem to need a lot of convincing.

Previous campaigns have been passed off as methods of getting rid of the remains of capitalism or as part of the building-up of a "communist" system of society, or as the eradication of specific errors and failings of the Old China. They were represented as a necessary process of cleaning up

and modernising the social structure and they dealt largely with problems that were laid at the door of the old era.

But this time it is different, in that the government leaders have to deal with problems which, they frankly proclaim arise directly from the present system of society. The "Socialist Education Campaign" is teaching workers, both in industry and the civil service, to deal with the new problems caused by the creation of a modern, technically developed state from a recently backward country. It is this which enables Premier Chou-En-lai to assign "historical significance" to the current campaign.

To enable them to reconcile awkward facts with an incorrect interpretation of society, the Chinese have to be dosed with plenty of "communist" education.

One problem with which they have to deal is that of the new "managerial class". Mao-Tze-tung, Chou-En-lai and the

rest of the old die-hards of the Communist Party, were tough, unscrupulous but courageous labour leaders tested in battle and called upon for great personal sacrifices in prompting the Communist Party to the leadership of what they may have once believed was a different system of society.

But the old guard are getting older, and they are finding it difficult to select their successors from the ranks of the new business bureaucracy who seem to be taking their place. These young people are slick, well educated executive types who are rising to the top in the nationalised concerns and government departments. They have little understanding of political theory, little desire to make personal sacrifices, but, like business executives the world over, are ambitious to rise in the hierarchy and enjoy the luxuries which only the possession of money makes possible. Such is a thumb-nail sketch of one of the groups that the die-hards are trying to impregnate with so-called communist ideology. But the die-hards are as horrified at this developing class, as the swan was when it found it had hatched a duckling. Capitalist society develops along its own lines, irrespective of the muddled thinking of its apologists.

An Tzu-wen, Director of the Organisation Department of the Party's Central Committee, considered the nature of some of these groups in some detail in an article which appeared in the Party journal *Red Flag* on 22/9/64 and which was reported in the *China Quarterly* April/June 1965. An is primarily concerned with the campaign to train successors to the present leadership. He distinguishes between the older cadres of pre-liberation vintage who have failed to adapt themselves to the technical and organisational development going on, and the younger ones who have not the political benefit of those who went through the Civil War.

It is from An's article that it is possible to build up a picture of the various groups he sees developing around him. His criticisms have been publicised to the greatest extent possible in the Chinese national press and on the radio. He said that the gravest dilemma for the Chinese leaders may be the conflict between their own background and the need for modernisation in economic planning.

Chou-En-lai made it clear in his report last December that one of the main motives behind the "Socialist Education Movement" was the need to prepare the country for economic

expansion. He speaks of the need for a "scientific and realistic approach". An calls on the older cadres to adapt themselves and he describes the movement as "a mass movement for studying Marxist-Leninist and Mao Tse-tung ideology with emphasis in its flexible interpretation and application".

The Chinese Government are training the new managerial class to a degree which must involve contact with the thinking of the outside world and they are at the same time inducing the old die-hards to work efficiently in the fervent atmosphere of industrial capitalism, misnamed "socialist expansion".

Another section being "educated" are the Chinese followers of the Russian communist party. Since it now seems that many of the interests of the Chinese ruling class are opposed to those of the Russian, Chinese supporters must be "re-educated" to enable them to make an intellectual somersault. China is living in a capitalist world jungle and must be prepared, in its own interests, to support a war against its erstwhile "comrades". There must be no fifth column in the Chinese camp.

Another homegrown problem is the rise of the wealthy farmer, a new economic group since the seizure of governmental power by the Chinese "communists". With their surpluses of commodity crops they have made a mockery of the food and clothing rationing which still obtains in China. The black market is now known as the free market and is officially recognised by the Government. Any of the rationed goods can be obtained at a higher price and this is part of a process whereby the rural rich are becoming richer. Universal rationing for all has become rationing by price, officially lauded by the authorities. This, of course, is the state of affairs to which the workers of the rest of the world are accustomed, whether they are starving in the backward countries or the "affluent" of western capitalism.

China has had a somewhat different history of social development to the West over the centuries, so that capitalism there is a little different from capitalism here in some of the details. But Chinese workers have basically the same economic interests as the workers here; and the so-called communist government there behaves domestically and in its foreign policies, like the capitalist power that in fact it is.

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The grand Plan is a farce

AFTER much ballyhoo the grand National Plan was published in September. It aims for a 25 per cent increase in total production by 1970. In a television talk Wilson described the Plan as a "national crusade for higher productivity" and called for a "determined attack on anything that holds back production". Among those he mentioned as "wreckers" were "Luddite employees". The Plan assumes that the problem of increased production is just a technical question; it assumes a state of social harmony since only if the interests of everyone were the same could those who hold up production justly be called wreckers. Both assumptions are open to challenge.

A social order in which the land, raw materials and the man-made instruments of production were owned in common and were subject to the democratic control of all would be one of social equality and harmony. There would be no built-in minority privileges or sources of group conflict. The problem of producing things to meet social and individual needs would be merely one of planning and organization. The people of such a society would have to work out ways of organizing themselves to satisfy their needs. Use would be the aim of production. Planned production for use would be the rule. Nobody could have any interest in wrecking the planned production of things to satisfy needs.

This, however, does not at all describe the present social order. For today the land and instruments of production are the property of a minority, which means that production is not for use—not even the use of the privileged minority themselves. This arises from another feature of the present order: the owners of the instruments of production, or capitalists, are rivals of each other, they compete to sell their products. Hence things are produced for sale rather than for use. Market production is unorganized, unplanned production. The competing capitalists get a living from the profits they get from selling their products. The making of such profits is in fact the aim of production. The question that is asked before things are produced is not "can they be made?" but "can they be sold?" The rule is thus: no profit, no production. The market and the need to make a profit are restricting factors; much more could be produced than can be sold at a profit.

Total production does increase in the long-run but this growth is by no means a steady expansion. Periods of rapid growth are followed by periods of stagnation. This is the familiar boom-slump (or "stop-go") cycle which is an unavoidable feature of unorganized, market production. Confidence in future profits is a very important factor in fixing the rate of growth. In times of rising prices and sales expanding and reckon that they can get the best of it; their rivals think the same. The result is overproduction relative to the market: more has been produced than can be sold. When this happens expansion is checked, production slumps and the number of unemployed rises. In treating increased production as if it were just a technical question the Plan ignores the dangers of overproduction. Wilson merrily calls for more and more production without stopping to think whether it can be sold. Even if he doesn't businessmen will. By all accounts the Plan is over-optimistic so that if businesses do gear their output figures to its targets they may find themselves with stocks of unsaleable goods. More likely, however, is that everyone will ignore the targets and treat the Plan as the scrap of paper it is.

Wilson seems to think that a rational explanation—and defence—of restrictive practices and strikes is impossible. As

we saw, the land, raw materials and machines are today monopolised by a minority. As a result the rest of the population are forced to work for those who own, for a wage or a salary. Wages are in fact the price of a person's working ability. The benefits of increased productivity go only to the minority of capitalist owners: a greater share of what is produced goes to them, if wages are kept to a minimum. It is obvious that the question of increased productivity is not one over which the two classes of people, capitalists and workers, have a common interest especially as labour-saving inventions, as the name implies, often allow workers in a particular industry to be laid off.

Those who make up the most numerous class of people, the wage and salary workers, are driven to consider ways of mitigating the workings of this system. The first and obvious move is to try to restrict the competition for jobs; to unite the workers of a particular trade into a body capable of raising wages by restricting competition. Trade Unions are an outstanding example of a restrictive practice. Many ways of restricting competition in particular trades have been worked out: long training periods; requirements that only trained men can do a particular task; requirements about unskilled assistants. Other practices aim at forcing capitalists to take on more workers than are strictly necessary. "Making work" may raise the costs of the capitalist but it also restricts competition in the labour market. Besides dealing with wages, Trade Unions can also exert pressure to improve working conditions. They can try to restrain arbitrary acts of dismissal and punishment by the owner or his disciplinary agents; to establish and maintain a standard pace of working which allows even the oldest to keep up. All these practices which, along with tea-breaks, make work a little less unpleasant also restrict production and raise costs.

These devices will be more or less effective depending on conditions in the labour market. But, as can be seen, they are protective rather than restrictive practices. Their primary aim is not to restrict production but to protect those who work for wages in a particular trade. There is no direct relationship between wages and productivity. Wages are a price and depend on market conditions. An increase in productivity which does not alter conditions in the labour market has no effect on wages. An argument does arise, however, as to how increased productivity does affect the demand for labour. Experience suggests that, in the first instance at least, labour-saving inventions lead to sackings and hence help to exert a downward pressure on wages by increasing competition in parts of the labour market. When we consider the long-run effect, we should remember that under the wages system people live from week to week and, as Keynes is supposed to have said, "in the long run we're dead". Again, there is the lesson of "overproduction" where the result has been widespread unemployment. The experiences of workers over the years has suggested that unrestricted competition and production are by no means beneficial to them. "Restrictive practices" are tried and successful weapons for defending the interest of the class of wage and salary workers.

Strikes, too, interrupt production and thus are condemned by Wilson. But here again experience has taught that the collective withdrawal of labour is a most useful defensive weapon. Experience has also taught the best time to use it. In times of slump, with many seeking work, strikes were less effective. In times or shortages of labour the matter is altogether different. Groups of wage-workers can choose when

to use it. The obvious choice is when an interruption of production is going to hurt the capitalist most: when he has a valuable order or when sales are good. In these circumstances he will wish to settle more quickly. Thus for airport workers to strike at a peak holiday period is by no means the result of "viciousness" but rather of sound action based on experience. It is true that in cases like this other workers are put to considerable inconvenience and, of course, popular sympathy should not be ignored when considering strike action. It seems that only when "the public" suffer will the capitalist employer listen.

We see then that Trade Union protective practices and strikes are by no means examples of inconsiderate wrecking. They arise from the very nature of the present social order which forces one of the two classes to defend its interests in these ways. In assuming that such actions are irrational the Plan indulges in wishful thinking. The class struggle is a fact which cannot be persuaded (or coerced) out of existence. These practices are firmly rooted in the tradition of those sections of the working class where Trade Unionism is common. They will persist and be modernised and perfected throughout the period of the Plan. The class struggle too will treat the Plan as a scrap of paper.

The Plan assumes, as we have seen, that the interests of employers and workers are the same but sees a basic conflict of interest between the various "nations" of the world. The expressed purpose of the Plan is to make goods made in Britain better able to compete on the world market. In this struggle for a share of the world market "restrictive practices" are acceptable. For it is not only workers who organise and struggle to restrict competition and production in their own interest. This is true of groups of capitalists too. They can, given favourable market conditions, join together to raise prices and so rake in a monopoly profit. The perfect competitive conditions of the Free Trade dream have never

existed and the very workings of competition lead to the growth of monopoly elements. The "nation" is itself a form of monopoly. The capitalists of a particular political area use the power of their State to try to further their interests in the same way that workers use their Trade Unions. This power is used in various ways to restrict competition, especially by tariff protection, which restricts the free movement of goods and gold. Tariffs, import controls, duties and surcharges, national currencies, and exchange control all restrict some parts of production in the interests of a particular group of capitalists. In the eyes of the Plan some such restrictions are praiseworthy. The Plan is against monopolies at home (which allow one group of capitalists to hold the rest to ransom) except for those in the export industries. Clearly a double-standard is applied: the capitalists on the national scale can band together to restrict production but the workers, never!

But here again the Plan is unrealistic. Many of the measures it offers for solving the capitalists' overseas payments problem, such as cutting down overseas aid, investment and defence spending and finding substitutes for imports, may make the world market more competitive, thus making the 5 per cent annual increase in exports harder to get. For these measures could make the overseas payments of other groups correspondingly worse. They too will try to recoup by similar methods.

So all in all the grand Plan is a farce. Even as an attempt to solve the capitalists' particular problem it will most probably fail. It had to ignore the possibility of overproduction, the class struggle and the effect of its own policies on the world market. It will turn out to be no more reliable than the long-range weather forecasts which have also been introduced recently. This is not really surprising since the market is as unpredictable as the weather.

A.L.B.

Should we feel flattered?

WHEN, in 1904, the founders of our Party were attempting to formulate a clear and correct statement of Socialist principles upon which to base the new organization, they found an earlier declaration which had appeared in William Morris's *Commonwealth* of the greatest value as a starting point. From time to time during the intervening years it has been suggested that the continued prominence we give to this declaration, to which we steadfastly adhere, could lead to misunderstanding, so great, it is said have been the changes in the style of language since the beginning of the century. So it is with considerable interest and, we must admit, a certain degree of amusement that we have recently come across a curiously distorted version of our declaration of principles published in the August issue of *Africa and the World* which retains the period-style if little else.

NIGERIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT
(Incorporating "Forward with Nigeria Movement")
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Nigerian Socialist Movement holds:

1. That Nigerian society as at present constituted is oriented to capitalist form of social relations and the consequent exploitation and enslavement of the working class and the peasants whose labour produces the bulk of the wealth of the community.
2. That there is necessarily an antagonism of interests between the privileged, aristocratic and plutocratic class on the one hand and the working class and peasants on the other.
3. That this antagonism of interests manifests itself in Nigeria in mounting industrial disputes, but that tribalism confuses and divides the workers and peasants and is encouraged as a means of diverting them from a genuine struggle to obtain their rights.
4. That the antagonism of interests can only be abolished by the adoption of a truly socialist system where the workers and peasants are secured the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

5. That as all political parties are an expression of class interests and the interests of the workers and peasants are diametrically opposed to those of the privileged, aristocratic and plutocratic class, the workers and peasants must organise themselves in unity, with progressive and revolutionary intellectuals as a political force for the conquest of governmental powers—national and local—so that the machinery of government may be converted from an instrument of oppression and exploitation into an agency of emancipation and the abolition of all privilege whether aristocratic, plutocratic or economic.

6. That racialism, wherever it is practised is opposed to the universal principles of equality and social justice and therefore the Nigerian Socialist Movement considers the abolition of racialism and the economic and political exploitation of the people of Africa the most urgent problem facing the world today.

7. That in order to liquidate colonialism; to arrest the present tendency to neo-colonialism; to emancipate the people of Africa from all forms of exploitation; to restore the dignity of African culture and personality; and the promotion of world peace; a Socialist Union Government of Africa is a necessity now.

8. That the Nigerian Socialist Movement therefore enters the field of political action as a force representing the aspirations and yearnings of the workers, peasants, the progressive and revolutionary intellectuals and youth, calls upon the workers, peasants and the people of Nigeria to muster under its banner so as to bring a quick end to the system of exploitation and slavery; and that comfort, equality, true freedom and social justice may prevail in Nigeria, Africa, and the world as a whole.

Issued by The Political and Policy Bureau of the Nigerian Socialist Movement, 192 High Street, Stoke Newington, London, N.16.

Were it not for the fact that this declaration of a London based group calling itself "The Nigerian Socialist Movement" follows our word order somewhat more closely, it might have been a mere adaptation of an earlier one which was put out in Nigeria by the Northern Elements Progressive Union. As it is, it looks very much as if it has been plagiarized direct from source. However, whatever were the circumstances in which this Nigerian group drew up its standpoint, we consider it necessary to deal with its tenets one by one.

(1) Their first error is to confine their analysis of society to Nigeria which is merely the successor state to the arbitrarily contrived British colonial unit of the same name, Nigeria's problems are not unique. They are characteristic of formerly colonial Afro-Asian territories which are now emerging as distinctive capitalist entities. The fact that we are dealing here with an emerging capitalist state does presuppose the existence of remnants, at times quite substantial, of earlier social structures and this is indicated by the reference to the peasants. But with an economy so utterly geared to the world market (palm-oil, cocoa, tin and sides) capitalism has for some time had a predominating role in Nigeria and it is to the working class born of this development, and not to the peasantry, that the call for socialism is relevant and can be made meaningful. And even allowing for the difference in the level of capitalist development in Britain and Nigeria, it still remains true that wealth is entirely the product of the labour of those who produce but do not possess, not just the "bulk" of it.

(3) We can allow clause (2) to pass, but in clause (3) we must point out the dangerous lack of precision when reference is made to workers obtaining "rights." We can

readily agree that for workers to retain tribal loyalties, just like feudal or national loyalties, does stand in the way of their becoming aware of the international class character of their problems.

(4) By borrowing from the British Labour Party's clause 4 the declaration descends into deep confusion and woolliness. Socialism does not mean the "equitable distribution of the fruits of the industry of the workers and peasants." Having converted the means of production and distribution into the common property of society the working class will, by so doing, have emancipated itself and, indeed, the whole of mankind from the entire class system. There will no more be workers or peasants to have "fair shares" secured for them than there will be capitalists or landowners to deny them. Each member of a classless socialist society will have free access to the things that he or she considers he needs. These may well vary from person to person, just as in working according to his ability each man will be contributing differently.

(5) To state that political parties are but the expression of class interests is true enough, but if, by what follows, it becomes evident that what constitutes a social class is not understood such a statement is rendered meaningless. Who are the "progressive and revolutionary intellectuals" with whom the workers and peasants are exhorted to unite? If by intellectuals we are to understand people possessing a high degree of understanding then we say that it is only when the majority of workers become intellectuals, in the sense of attaining a basic understanding of the nature of capitalism, their position in it and the socialist solution, that they will be able to bring about the Socialist Revolution. Furthermore, the history of human development shows that our fellow workers do have the capacity to achieve this. If, on the other hand—and this is more likely the case by "intellectual" is meant a person possessing superior mental powers, an élite, a leadership, then it is evident that what is envisaged is a non class-conscious working class being led to its salvation by the chosen few, an idea proven by bitter experience to be quite erroneous. And in the context of a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society, just who are such "intellectuals" anyway? They are, almost without exception, the embryo capitalist class, those with the skills, techniques and ambitions of power who, upon the emergence of a locally governed state become its ruling class and who, far from abolishing privilege, entrench it upon the new capital and wage labour basis.

(6) Again in error racialism is seen as a problem in itself. Properly perceived, racialism is a noxious by-product of economic exploitation and competition. Consequently its disappearance is dependent upon the attainment of socialist understanding by working men and women of the entire human race and their acting upon it. Racialism, like war, poverty and other monstrous facets of present-day society, is an inescapable consequence of capitalism. It is, therefore, the abolition of the wages system itself which is the most urgent task facing workers throughout the world today.

(7/8) The problems of capitalism are world-wide. The socialist solution must, if it is to be a solution at all, be world-wide, too. There can be no national, regional or even continental solution, no Nigerian or British, West African or West European solutions. Human dignity requires an end to exploitation of man by man everywhere.

E.S.G.

The rise of parliament in England

IN considering the history of Parliament, it is convenient to commence with the events leading up to the Civil War in England, when the institution of Parliament was at a cross-road. In Europe, under despotic monarchs the old feudal Parliaments were falling more and more into neglect. In England, however, as in the Netherlands, Parliament could not only maintain itself against the trend but could also struggle for greater strength.

Parliaments, Kings and Courts are not, and certainly were not, abstract methods of ruling. These institutions represented the administrative power of various economic classes and groups with their different interests in the organisation of society.

James I ruled through a Privy Council and Secretaries of State. The Law Courts, as the financial department, were openly involved in politics. Very few officials were paid; most obtained their money by fees, fines or tips. Patronage was the principal method of advancement as a servant of the Crown. Even foreign countries paid fees to courtiers to keep their interests in a favourable light.

Parliaments were only called into operation at odd intervals, generally in order to sanction new methods of raising money for the Crown. The Kings received monies raised by various means and this was a bone of contention as it made the Monarch partially independent of Parliamentary sanction.

The large landowners, or Lords, were increased in number by the Stuarts in order to strengthen their control over the House of Lords. The largest social group were the Gentry, or smaller landowners; they numbered about three-quarters of the House of Commons. The smaller groups—merchants, financiers and manufacturers—tended to side with the gentry, especially in the Commons. The legal profession was used by the sons of the gentry to gain knowledge of the law and a wider education. Oliver Cromwell was himself trained in this way.

The middle class groupings not only occupied the House of Commons but, as the ballot was based on property, also provided the electorate. Oddly enough, the Town middle class in places like London were not well placed in the number of Parliamentary votes available to them.

The lower social groupings had no political influence and exerted themselves, when conditions were favourable, by spasmodic rioting. The gentry were not entirely dependent on the land and had interests in wool, mining and trading, as well as shipping loans. Thus they became more resentful of interference by the Crown and Court in matters of trade, finance and taxes, but neither they, nor any other class, had the strength or the desire to remove the power of the Crown and the great lords.

The ideas of men were encompassed by religion and politics were often expressed in those terms. Thus the radical wing of English Society were by definition strict Protestants, who by using the House of Commons as a platform strengthened Parliamentary procedure. The tussles between James I and the Puritans often, therefore, revolved around Church matters. James halted the process of Church lands going to laymen and the Puritans sought to clip wealth from the Bishops.

But Parliament was still weak; between 1603 and 1629 it sat for only three years and four months. While the Crown could force loans, it was dependent to some extent on London usurers. A split arose over James I's Great Contract, a

cloth and wool trading plan which floundered in an economic morass. As a result James dispensed with Parliament for 10 years.

The crowning of Charles I tended to aggravate the simmering conflict. Not as flexible as his father, Charles was influenced by the continental despotisms and saw himself as King by "Divine Right" (an argument which was rather new). In his second Parliament (1626) Charles, in what he no doubt considered a smart move, removed the leaders by making them Sheriffs. But the gap was filled by the few, eloquent extremists. When the King forced a loan, 70 gentry went to gaol rather than pay up. The Commons wanted intervention in Germany to offset Spain but refused to pay or sanction taxes for its prosecution. The gentry and traders needed a navy to protect their trading vessels but they jibbed at paying "Ship Money." At the back of this conflict was the Commons' strong objection to money being raised without parliamentary consent, the mistrust of Charles' objects and a fear of England being tied to either Spain or France.

The King's threat to restore Church and monastic lands, thus bringing the Church nearer to the old Catholic faith, alarmed even the Scottish peers. The King and Court became weaker, while Parliament and the social groups who supported it gained strength. The Long Parliament (1640/1) removed the King's advisers, ordered a Parliament every three years, broke some of the Crown monopolies (some of which Charles had dug up from feudal times), abolished the Star Chamber and ended the Welsh and Northern Councils, bringing the country as a whole increasingly under the control of Parliament.

However, the more cautious groups feared riot crazy mobs and the "root and limb" Puritans. The Petition of Great Remonstrance was only carried by 11 votes; the King recovered some of his lost ground. His undoing was the City of London—controlled by Puritans, its citizens having a very low voting quota, the place seethed with riot and revolt. When Charles tried to arrest five members the City gave them refuge; the King's entry into Parliament with soldiers was regarded as the final straw.

The Civil War divided the country roughly into two parts—Parliamentary London, the East and South—Royalist Wales, the West and North. The class struggles were still not clearly defined and it was in the realm of ideas that the divisions of the Civil War were more sharply expressed.

Parliament's victory soon revealed that it was unable to rule, because the classes who were in power were not strong or developed enough to do so. The Presbyterians aimed to dispense with the Army. The Independents and Levellers feared this as a blow against them. Eventually the Army purged the House of Presbyterians and the strengthened Independents then purged the Army of Levellers. Cromwell, unable to obtain a "Puritan Policy," ruled as Protector, his powers curbed by a body called the "Instrument of Government." Thus the aspirations of the Gentry for a strong Parliament linked with a more pliable King came to naught.

Charles II's Restoration was welcomed as a means of overthrowing the more extreme Puritans, and though the King was back in the executive saddle Parliament maintained itself. The coming of James II opened the old rupture. James stood for an absolute Catholic monarchy and tried his hand in a number of illegal moves. But times were changed; there were not enough of the old time Catholic Absolutists to back him up. James was exiled and the Stuarts

had backed another loser.

English Parliamentary structure and methods became bedevilled by a fear of change. The gentry saw themselves as the class destined to rule England, a position they jealously guarded until the Reform Bills and the construction of a new electoral system. The Kings still played their role, but the Hanoverians lost power. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet became the key men and the Court more and more of a rubber stamp; the King appointed the Ministers, but they could legislate only with the consent of Parliament.

By the 18th and 19th centuries the social face of Britain was changing. The gentry were involved in the rapidly expanding mines, and land ownership was not the sole means of wealth. Industry was in a state of technical revolution, factory owners emerged from the gentry. Towns, new and ugly, grew apace, while the old ones decayed and transport advanced, and the far corners of the earth became places fit for plunder. The use of religious terms in politics declined and political labels took their place. A property-less working class grew up and the independent craftsmen were swamped in the upsurge of capitalism.

The new class of capitalism—manufacture, financier and worker—were confronted with an electoral system that may have been useful in the middle ages, but by the 1820s had become a bad joke. Sheep-grazed hilltops returned two members to Parliament, but new, smoke-laden industrial centres had no representation at all. The voting system was a disorganised fantasy, based on the rateable value of property but much modified over the centuries by local conditions.

RENT ROWS

Just before I joined the Socialist Party, I was friendly with Albert, a member of the Communist Party, a man with a wife and two young children, who has been in the army during the last war and like many others, had come back to an appalling housing problem. Albert and his family lived in two small rooms, and in between his battles with the local housing committee, he would lead all sorts of militant actions—such as "squating"—and would urge my support in the "day-to-day struggle". He was evicted from many a vacant property (and sometimes from meetings of the town council too) before he was eventually granted a house on a new estate.

Not a very tolerant man, he was furious when he heard of my decision to join the SPGB "They never do nuthin'," he shouted contemptuously, and refused to speak to me ever again. Albert has long since moved out of the district and I wonder just what his political views are today—also whether his present home is a council house.

Certainly in those earlier days this would have been the limit of his horizon—what he would have called "doin' sumthin'"—and we can agree that a

council house is preferable to a disused army nissen hut. But it makes a pretty poor comparison with what society is really capable of producing. And there is another unpleasant aspect which these day-to-day strugglers seem to overlook, and that is the role of the local authorities as landlords. They can be just as harsh as private owners, particularly if you fall behind with the rent, and they are not so restricted legally when it comes to the question of rent increases.

I am reminded of this by a recent report that Belfast City Council have decided to increase their house rents by up to 5/9d. a week. When it was debated there were noisy protests from tenants in the public gallery, but the decision went through. Albert would have acclaimed the protest as something concrete; he would have missed the point that this was one result of his previous struggles—council house building has been beloved of the left for donkey's years—and perhaps the most important point of all would have completely eluded him. It is only workers who have to struggle for, live in, and protest about the rent of, council houses.

E.T.C.

The Whig Peers backed up the new ruling classes in the struggle for Parliamentary reform. The Tories were fighting a rearguard action, hoping to ensure that they would not be penalised under the new system. After three attempts, the Reform Bill went through in 1830. Though the new House of Commons still comprised gentry and aristocratic relatives, it allowed the new capitalist class to clear the decks for their ultimate take over.

The next century was one of piece-meal struggle and compromise, as the Commons whittled away the powers of the Lords until in 1911 the Commons obtained the final recognition as the premier body. This period also saw a shifting of ranks, as groups and classes edged from one political party into another. The present Liberal Party no longer contains the descendants of the Great Whig Peers and the Tories are now far more industrialist than landowner.

The emergence of the mass working class as a political and voting force has altered the face of parliamentary tactics. No party can control the machinery of government without some hefty backing coming from the working class. In order to run capitalism in the interests of the privileged few, modern parties have to speak in the name of all and sundry.

In their struggles to better their lot, and for a say in the running of capitalism, the working class have played no small part in the strengthening of parliamentary institutions. The Reform Movement, the Chartists, and the Suffragettes have all been operative only because of working class support. There is now an even greater task for the working class to perform.

JACK LAW

Profit in Russia, continued from page 179

that this has stopped doesn't mean that the wealthy class who rule Russia don't get a share in the proceeds of the State exploitation of wage-labour. They do, but not in the obvious forms of dividends on shares or interest on bonds. They get it as prizes, bonuses, bloated salaries and the like (all devices used by private corporations in the West to share out profits and avoid profits taxes). Mr. Horwood's argument about the people's profits is wrong, but it would be more plausible if political democracy existed in Russia.

It also shows how, as Russian State capitalism gets more and more like the capitalism of the West, its supporters are driven to ever more fantastic arguments to keep up the pretence of Socialism. In the past no one would have dared to argue that Russia was socialist because State profit-making was Socialism.

Finally, no Labour M.P.s are members of the Socialist Party because by joining a capitalist party they have ranged themselves on the side of the opponents of Socialism and are thus ineligible for membership.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

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The Pope and peace

Of course it made some nice headlines for the newspapers; but the one thing the Pope's visit to New York last month was not concerned with was peace.

It is difficult to imagine anyone being taken in by the Pope's speech, so numerous and familiar are the appeals and declarations which are constantly being made on the subject—often by politicians who are up to their necks in war.

None of the world leaders who make these appeals ever has the slightest difficulty in excusing the wars in which he gets involved. None of them ever has any difficulty in excusing the most horrible of atrocities; all of them are concerned with the national interests of their ruling class before any considerations of humanity.

In one way, it was fitting that the Pope should make his appeal at the United Nations, for that more than anything highlighted its ineffectuality. UNO has a function when the smaller nations are involved in a comparatively trivial dis-

pute, which the bigger powers want to see cleared up. But when the stakes are higher, it is a different matter.

UNO was helpless in Korea. It could do nothing over the Berlin crisis. The vague noises it made over Cuba were not allowed to divert Russia and America from their stern purpose. It stands helplessly by now, as the war rages in Vietnam.

Just as the great powers of capitalism do not allow UNO to affect the way in which they protect their interests, so they do not tolerate interference from religious leaders. The Pope has his uses to capitalism, but international politics cannot be settled in the Vatican.

In any case, what are any appeals for peace worth? War in the modern world does not happen by accident, or because the leaders of world religion have omitted to make a speech about peace. War is a direct result of the nature of capitalism and there is no more ardent supporter of that system than the Catholic Church.

That is why Catholics are in no two minds, when a war breaks out. With the blessing of their Church, they take arms—often killing their fellow Catholics on the other side.

The time for a religious leader to speak out is when the shooting starts. But to do so would be to challenge the capitalist social system; it would be to expose religious hypocrisy, with which the churches constantly divert working class energies from the essential task of building a world of peace and brotherhood.

It is only necessary to state this proposition, to see how ridiculous it is.

New York had quite a time during the Pope's flying visit. And when he was gone they went back to the business of running capitalism; in factories and offices the American workers were still exploited, the Stock Exchange went on with its dealings, in the South the Negro was still persecuted. And the Pentagon was still running the show in Vietnam.

Indonesia

"PALACE COLONEL OUSTS SOEKARNO."
"JAKARTA CLAIMS COUP CRUSHED."

Conflicting headlines—always a sign that nobody is quite sure what is going on, but everybody's doing their best—brought Indonesia once again onto the front pages. Not that Indonesia is out of the news for very long. This "Republic of Islands", as one newspaper aptly described it, is the largest country in South East Asia.

Like so many new States that were once colonies of a European power, Indonesia is a rather ramshackle affair, with great difficulty in holding its scattered parts together. The boundaries

of these colonies were largely fixed by what the colonisers could grab, and hold against the attacks of their greedy rivals.

They are not always particularly easy to administer as an independent state. In addition Indonesia has terribly poverty. This has not however prevented their new ruling class from embarking on a continual policy of Imperialist expansion, aimed at making Indonesian the dominant power in South East Asia.

One's mind goes back to 1945, when the "Dutch East Indies" proclaimed their Independence, and began a fight against Holland. It was one of the first to do so, and great hopes were held by the "Left" as to their prospects.

"Australian Unions" organised strikes to hold up shipments of arms, and "Hands off Indonesia" placards were carried on May Day in London. Independence was gained, and their followed the usual process of exploitation by the new ruling class that had replaced the old.

The main conclusion was that this revolt, which appears to have been "Communist" inspired, would weaken Indonesia's ties with China. This may be the case, but should anybody happen to be worrying, if it suits the interests of the ruling classes in these two countries, the ties will soon tighten up again.

Gas strike

Towards the end of last September British Petroleum announced that they had struck natural gas beneath the North Sea, although they were not sure that they had found enough to make it a paying proposition.

This was the first strike of any importance in the search which eight groups are carrying on in the North Sea, at a cost somewhere near £100 million. At that price, they obviously hope to find something worthwhile and the news

from BP gave them the first glimmering of hope that they will do so.

Of course, the press rhapsodised upon the benefits which the gas strike is supposed to be bringing the people of this country. But a couple of weeks later another piece of news put the matter in a different perspective.

On 6th October the Dutch and British governments signed an agreement which fixed the exact line dividing the areas over which each of them has the

right to grant licences to drill for gas and oil. The British government already had applications for licences from the big oil firms in their pending trays.

What this means is that, in the search for valuable raw materials and fuels, the British and Dutch ruling classes have simply annexed the North Sea, giving themselves the legal powers to do so in the process.

This is something like what happened when the newborn capitalist powers were

NEWS IN REVIEW

opening up the world to their manufacturers and commerce. They simply moved in and stole vast areas of the world, suppressed the inhabitants, fixed the borders, signed agreements with other international robbers and gave licences and concessions to their own companies to exploit the place.

There is, of course, no need to suppress the fish in the North Sea. But the carve-up of the area could be as much a source of dispute in the future as was the division of Africa and the Far East.

We are being told that nothing but

joy and plenty will result from the discovery of gas and oil under the North Sea. Yet there are no grounds to believe this.

How much happiness did the Congo's rubber bring? What contribution to the peace of the world has the oil in the Middle East made? What were the effects on the war in Algeria, when the French discovered oil and gas under the Sahara?

Capitalism is a competitive system, in which rival powers fight ruthlessly for advantage. In this set-up, the discovery

of sources of natural wealth often turn out to be anything but a blessing for mankind.

If the North Sea is the *El Dorado* which some of the experts think, it may well become another sore spot. The agreements which now divide the area will be challenged by those powers which arrived too late to get a share. Legal arguments—and perhaps worse—will be used in the dispute; there will be the customary declamations about "right" and "heritage". And who dare say what the end of it will be?

Indian A-Bomb

The plain fact about the Indian government's much publicised decision, several years ago, not to produce an atomic bomb is that it is too good to be true.

And so it is turning out.

India's renunciation meant that some people thought of her as a country where human interests were put above those of narrow nationalism. India was held up as an example for the rest of the sabre-rattling world to follow.

This has never been consistent with the way India acted over, say Goa and Kashmir—incidents which made Delhi's attitude to atomic weapon look suspiciously like one inspired by anything but humanitarianism.

In any case, the Indian government always made it clear that, if the international situation demanded it, they would make the Bomb. For a long time they have been working on the basics of a nuclear weapon—their

separation plant near Bombay, which produces plutonium, has been working for over a year.

And now comes the news from New Delhi that the pressure from Indian military and political circles to make the Bomb is growing, and that (according to *The Guardian* of 27th September last) the first one may be exploded sometime next year.

The campaign in favour of an Indian Bomb, to go with the rest in the world, has gathered strength from recent events. Indian military men complain that Pakistan had the advantage of advanced American weapons in the fighting in Kashmir, and that the threat from China looms ever larger.

They also claim that the old argument, that the Bomb was too expensive, has been disproved. The estimated cost is now around £20 million. There is no record yet of anyone in India protesting at this sort of money being spent on

weapons by a country which has such a chronic problem of hunger and disease.

Such considerations are irrelevant. The reasons for making the Bomb are always the same; one senior Indian officer summed them up: "... if national interests are at stake ... we have no alternative but to go ahead."

Everyone is familiar now with the argument of "national interests". It is used to excuse any suffering, any atrocity, any betrayal. It is an argument which will be used by many nations if and when a global nuclear war ever starts.

It is only appropriate that we should be hearing the same argument now that India may be getting ready to go back on her word over atomic weapons. It is also appropriate that India, who has done so much to foster the idea that there are such things as oases of nobility among the murderous desert of capitalism, should herself expose the fallacy.

THE GROWTH OF IDEAS

All ideas are but the more or less transformed reflections of real things. Our brain receives, through the medium of the sensory organs, impressions or sensations from the world exterior to it. Our thoughts are all of necessity based upon these impressions, which however, become combined in the most intricate manner. Nevertheless, our ideas can never go beyond the limits set by the experience thus gained.

From this basis the origin of entirely new ideas can only be explained by the fact that man is continually creating an artificial environment, which means that fresh material from which impressions may be received are brought into being, and which also may assist in the perception of a hitherto unknown side and fresh attributes of the material in the Universe, which up till then he had been conscious of only in

an imperfect manner or not at all. In either case it is the result of man's powers of production, which adds to and supplements the world of nature, which is at the root of the new ideas.

Take for example the invention of the telescope. Not only does the newly constructed instrument of itself form the basis of new ideas, but the manner of its use also. The laws of light which may incidentally be discovered by its aid become further objects or rather, subjects of contemplation, as also the details of the Universe unfolded by its use, which previously, although obviously forming a part of man's environment, had yet been unperceived by him because of the insufficiency for this purpose of his organs of sight.

From SOCIALIST STANDARD, November 1915.

The WESTERN SOCIALIST

Journal for Socialism
in the
U.S.A. and Canada

In the current issue
INDIA & PAKISTAN
IS RUSSIA "GOING" CAPITALIST?
WHAT IS THIS SOCIALISM?
HIGH & LOW FINANCE
BOSTON POLICE STRIKE

6d bi-monthly

The Passing Show

Now He Tells Us.

In November 1956, a British and French force invaded Suez. At the same time, Russia was busily suppressing the Hungarian rising and there was a rich field for hypocrisy, with each side condemning the other for military aggression. America, smug in her official non-alignment, tut-tutted loudly and it was mainly as a result of her pressure through the U.N. and behind the scenes, that the Suez adventure collapsed. The Israelis had already attacked and it was claimed that the Anglo-French operation was really a "police action" to separate the contestants and demilitarize the Canal zone. The *Daily Mirror* made mincemeat of the little piece of double talk, and a lot of people didn't believe it anyway (a lot did believe it as well).

The real reason for the action was the threat which Britain and France saw to their interests in the area from Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal—only on August 8th of that year, Sir Anthony Eden had said "Suez is a question of life and death for us." Moreover, the active support and encouragement given by Cairo to the Algerian rebels had long angered the French ruling class and here was an opportunity to put a stop to it once and for all. There was a sort of tenuous three-sided collusion between Britain, France and Israel—tenuous because Britain was not the willing ally of Ben Gurion and, if we are to believe the Bromberger Brothers, as late as mid-October had been prepared to bomb Israel in the event of a conflict with Jordan. Tenuous because, again according to the Brombergers, the French wanted much swifter and more decisive action than the ailing and hesitant Sir Anthony was prepared to take.

Less than a year later, Merry and Serge Bromberger published their book *Secrets of Suez* which well and truly blew the gaff about the double-dealing and behind-the-scenes manoeuvres between the participants in this ugly affair. "We were warned" they said in a foreword, "that there might be denials for political reasons." An under statement indeed—there were plenty of denials, including a denial of collusion with Israel, despite the mounting evidence to support it.

Well that was a few years ago and memories may have got a bit hazy, so it's interesting to have the Israeli General

Moshe Dayan's confirmation in his book *Diary of the Sinai Campaign* reviewed in *The Observer* for September 26. General Dayan says that consultations with London and Paris had been going on for at least two months before the outbreak of hostilities, and when the Israeli attack came it was well organised and executed. It had naval support, and air cover by some sixty Mystère IV fighters and fighter bombers—all provided by France.

We should be used by now to the lying denials of capitalist politicians, particularly concerning matters of war; none of them would dare to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It's in the bitter irony of capitalism's scheme of things that only long after the event does the truth trickle out, often from the pens of those who were doing the dirty work at the time. The Brombergers were not opposed to the Suez action; they were concerned mainly to criticise the way it had been handled, particularly by the British. The collusion, apparently, was not efficient enough for them.

By the way, the Socialist Party did not have to wait years before we took a stand in opposition. We published a leaflet in unqualified condemnation within a day or two of the start of the fight, and sent copies of it all over the world. Remember that on this ninth anniversary of the Suez crisis, then read again the Brombergers' book and appreciate the soundness of our stand.

But not a drop to drink.

Water has been in the world a long time, but just look at the state of some people's necks! Just the sort of funny to make a Hyde Park audience titter you might think, but if the drought conditions experienced in New York this summer become more commonplace elsewhere, the dirtynecks among us may be claiming some moral justification for their existence. New York's water supply all but dried up, and you would consider yourself lucky if you got a muddy brown dribble at the turn of your kitchen tap. "Save Water" begged the slogan tied to a blimp floating over the city.

Droughts have been with us on and off for many years—I remember the "use less water" posters on the sides of

buses when I was a boy—and are not a feature entirely of present day society. Their effects have however been accentuated by rapidly increasing demand, mainly industrial, particularly since the end of the second world war. In fact, even without droughts, the rising level of water consumption threatens to cause serious shortages in parts of the world within a few years.

If you are a simple minded type who looks at problem purely from a technical point of view, the answer to the problem would also be quite simple. Build more reservoirs; transfer water from one place to another by a grid system (the rainfall in Britain overall, for example, is still enough to meet overall needs); perhaps desalt water from the sea? Regrettably, though, the answer is not entirely a technical one, or the problem would never have reached its present proportions.

Why do I say this? Because the experts have been looking not just for a solution, but for a *cheap* one, and the first two alternatives I have mentioned would call for a lot of money. So also would the third, a few years ago. Methods of desalting such as conventional distillation, ion-exchange etc. have been available for some time (in fact the firm of G. and J. Weir patented their first desalination plant in 1884) but they were not a cheap proposition. The matter has been raised again now, only because atomic energy looks like bringing the cost down with a bump.

"Can water from the sea be processed at a cost which rivals that of rainwater collection?" asked *Guardian* science correspondent Anthony Tucker on October 5th. The first international conference on desalination in Washington early in October, seemed to think that this was feasible. The flash-distillation process would use the heat from an atomic reactor (already producing cheap electricity) to produce desalted water costing about three shillings a thousand gallons. Anyway the British and American governments are sufficiently confident to invest quite a few millions in its development and in the not too distant future, we shall no doubt be witnessing the familiar competition between rivals trying to capture the new market for this type of plant. It has been estimated that single contracts in this field could be worth £50 millions or more.

The lesson to learn from this is not

that capitalism is incapable of solving some problems technically, but that its profit motive often hampers and delays their solution for years. As Tucker points out, man has had it within his power for some time to make the desert bloom again. However:—

The future of Australia and of many large semi-arid areas . . . will be largely determined by whether or not it is economic to secure the supplies of water necessary for development.

So there it is in a nutshell. We shall never be able to see the technical wood for the financial trees so long as capitalism lasts.

Gaspers.

"According to the new system, workers would be paid more for producing more, improving quality and raising the profits of their enterprise".

(Soviet Premier Kosygin, speaking on new bonus system, on September 27th.)

"Action to mitigate noise is limited by economics. Our own national airlines have narrow profit margins, and if foreign airlines found restrictions too great they might avoid Britain and leave us in an aviation backwater".

(Aviation Minister Roy Jenkins, to the airport consultative committee at County Hall, September 15th.)

"The worst drought conditions in parts of Southern and Eastern Africa for thirty

years have brought hundreds of thousands of people to the edge of starvation.

(*Guardian* report September 23rd.)
"President Nkrumah said that Ghana would restrict production rather than put up with the present low prices for her cocoa".

(*Guardian* report September 23rd.)

"I am not here to help the industry but with the intention of helping our company and our shareholders".

(Egg Producer John Eastwood, speaking to shareholders on September 22nd.)

"I am not a rich woman".

(The Dowager Marchioness of Queensberry, after having been robbed of £15,000 worth of jewellery.)

E.T.C.

LETTER: PROFIT MOTIVE IN RUSSIA

Dear Sirs,

I am writing as one who is anxious for Socialism to be established and therefore agree with your basic principles. However I am extremely puzzled at your antagonism to the Communist countries and the *Daily Worker*.

Surely it is obvious that these are working for the same principles as the SPGB, so why knock them? Your behaviour is almost as bad as that of our government, which claims to be Socialist but supports the USA in its Colonialist adventures.

This blind spot of yours makes you fail to understand the difference between Russia's profit motive and that of the Capitalists. The argument in the August *Socialist Standard* is nonsense. You say quite correctly "... the surplus that arises from the labour of all will be used for the benefit of all." Is not this what occurs in Russia? Their profits do not go into private pockets, but are collected by the State for the benefit of all the Russians.

You sneer at the word "State". Who would administer the profits in this country if it became Socialist according to your ideas? It could only be the State. What happens now to the profits of the Nationalised industries here? It ceases to go to shareholders pockets but is used for the benefit of all consumers. That is Socialism.

By ignorantly knocking the countries which have become Socialist, you are making your party quite ineffective. This is a great pity, because we can ill afford to waste such a potential.

Are any of the Labour Party M.P.s also members of the SPGB? If not why not?

Yours faithfully,

H. HORWOD.

REPLY

The aim of the article under discussion was to show that the origin of Profit was

not efficiency or price-raising but the unpaid labour of the working class. Profit is the form under which the surplus above the consumption needs of the producers is taken by the owning class in capitalist society. This is so in Russia as here.

H. Horwod denies this. He argues that profits made in State industries are not the same as profits made in private industries as they are used to benefit everybody instead of going into the pockets of a few shareholders. "That", he says, "is Socialism". We would call it State capitalism. State profit-making is not Socialism. In socialist society there will be no State and no profits. The whole social product (including the "surplus") will belong to society as soon as it is made. Buying and selling and all that goes with it like profit-making and working for wages won't exist. It will just be a question of allotting what is made to various social uses and to individual consumption. This is production for use.

We are asked about the State. As Gabriel Deville, once put it: "The State is the public power of coercion created and maintained in human societies by their division into classes, a power which, being clothed with force, makes laws and levies taxes". The State is not just an administrative machine; its central feature is force. In socialist society, with the end of classes there will be no need for a public power of coercion; the centre will simply be a clearing house for settling social affairs. In class societies the State is used by the ruling class to serve its ends. Today the capitalists are the ruling class so the State serves their ends. The duties they give it are many: from looking after their general interests at home and abroad to the running of industries. Such State-run or nationalized industries have nothing to do with Socialism. The basic features of capitalism, profit-making and working for wages, remain.

What happens to the profits of national-

ised industries? In Britain, despite the popular myth, most of them make a "trading surplus". Some of this is paid out as interest on loans; some is taken as taxes; the rest is used again to exploit wage-labour or kept as a reserve. How much goes in interest payments can be got from the blue-books on *National Income and Expenditure*. Worswick and Ady in *The British Economy in the 1950's* give a table based on this information. For most of the period interest payments amounted to about 40 per cent of "gross income (before depreciation)". In 1960, for instance, this was £590m. Of this £286m. went as interest and £12m. as taxes, leaving a net income of £292m. Let's see where this interest goes. Before 1956 all the nationalised industries except coal could borrow directly from the capital market. They used to offer interest-bearing stock for sale. The 1956 Finance Act made them borrow from the Treasury. So the interest goes to the Treasury and in the end into the pockets of those who lend to the government (including, ironically enough, the Moscow Narodny Bank which holds British Treasury bills!). Most of the profits are of course re-invested as in private industries. But capitalists can still enjoy the proceeds of exploitation in the State industries—as bill and bond holders instead of as shareholders.

In Russia the arrangements are a little different and more complicated to unravel. The State industries are controlled from the centre as to output, prices and surplus. Most of the surplus which the State industries make is taken by the centre as taxes and is used to pay for the upkeep of the State as well as for sharing out amongst the State industries for re-investment. Until recently the State used to raise extra money for investment by means of loans, often compulsory. The rich were given a chance to invest in government bonds. The fact

[continued bottom page 179]

Meetings

CENTRAL LONDON

Asquith Room, 2 Soho Square, W1
Sundays 8 pm (doors open 7.30 pm)

November 7th
**RECENT POLITICAL CHANGES
IN FRANCE**
Speaker: A. Buick

November 14th
THE LIFE OF KARL MARX
Speaker: H. Young

November 21st
**THE ECONOMIC THEORIES OF
KARL MARX**
Speaker: E. Hardy

November 28th
**THE MATERIALIST
CONCEPTION OF HISTORY**
Speaker: G. Maclatchie

HACKNEY

Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St., E9
(facing Hackney Empire)
Wednesdays, 8.30 pm

November 10th
INFLATION & DEFLATION
Speaker: E. Hardy

November 24th
**THE MATERIALIST
CONCEPTION OF HISTORY**
Speaker: G. Maclatchie

LEWISHAM

Davenport Hall (Co-op), 1 Davenport
Road, Rushley Green, SE6
Mondays 8 pm

November 8th
MEN AND MACHINERY

November 15th
THE WASTE OF CAPITALISM

November 22nd
WHY UNEMPLOYMENT?

December 6th
THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

December 13th
THE TORY OPPOSITION

WEST LONDON

Fridays 8 pm
Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall,
Hammersmith (facing river, few
minutes from Broadway)

19th November
TAPE "ROBBIE BURNS"
with discussion opened by member

26th November
JACK LONDON
Speaker: J. Donaldson

HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL (Small Hall)

Thursday, 18th November, 8 pm
CAN UNO PREVENT WAR?

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE

The Royal Oak, York Street, W1
(near Marylebone Road)
Wednesdays 9 pm

November 3rd
**concluding lecture on the
ENGLISH CIVIL WAR and the
growth of Parliament**
Lecturer: L. Dale

November 17th
MY VISIT TO RUSSIA
Speaker: D. Hidson

November 24th
**100 years of the
SALVATION ARMY**
Speaker: J. Carter

December 1st
**THE LITERATURE OF THE
MARXIAN SCHOOL**
Speaker: S. Goldstein

MANCHESTER

International Centre, George Street
Friday, 26th November, 7.30 pm
Lecture and Discussion

HEAD OFFICE

A series of lectures and discussions at
52 Clapham High Street, London SW4
Thursdays 8 pm

November 4th
THE LIBERAL PARTY

Discussion to be opened by a member
of the Battersea Young Liberals

RELIGION TODAY

November 11th
SOCIALISM OR RELIGION
Speaker: P. Lawrence

*At the following three meetings repre-
sentatives of the religious organisa-
tions will provide the main speaker.
A member of the SPGB will reply
from the platform followed by
questions and discussion.*

November 18th
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

November 25th
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

December 2nd
SALVATION ARMY

December 9th and 16th
FILM **THE GERMAN STORY**
Commentary by H. Weaver

AUTUMN SCHOOL

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1
Saturday, 13th November
PRICES AND INCOMES POLICY
2.15 pm—3.15 pm
Break for refreshments
3.45 pm—5 pm
Lecturer E. Hardy

GLASGOW MEETINGS

Woodside Public Halls
Sundays, 7.30 pm

November 7th
A YEAR'S HARD LABOUR
Speaker: R. Donnelly

November 14th
LABOUR'S FOREIGN POLICY
Speaker: J. Higgins

November 21st
THE INCOMES POLICY MYTH
Speaker: R. Russell

November 28th
BRITISH POLICY MINORITY
Speaker: J. Richmond

STEVENAGE

Red Lion, High Street, Old Town
Mondays, 8 pm

November 1st
THE IMAGE OF THE SPGB
Discussion opened by Mr. McLuckie,
lecturer in sociology, Hatfield College
of Technology

November 15th
ART & SOCIALISM
Speaker: Mr. R. Lloyd

December 6th
THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION
Speaker: L. Dale

WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Backhouse Rooms, Handside Lane
Mondays, November 8th and 22nd

KIDDERMINSTER

Station Inn, Farfield
Comberton Road
Wednesday, 10th November, 7.30 pm
DIALECTICS
Speaker: H. McJannett

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays

Hyde Park, 3 and 6 pm
East Street, Walworth
7th and 28th November (11 am)
21st November (noon)
14th November (1 pm)

Mondays

Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Wednesdays

Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers Street) 8 pm

Thursdays

Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm
Earls Court, 8 pm
Bromley Library, 8.30 pm

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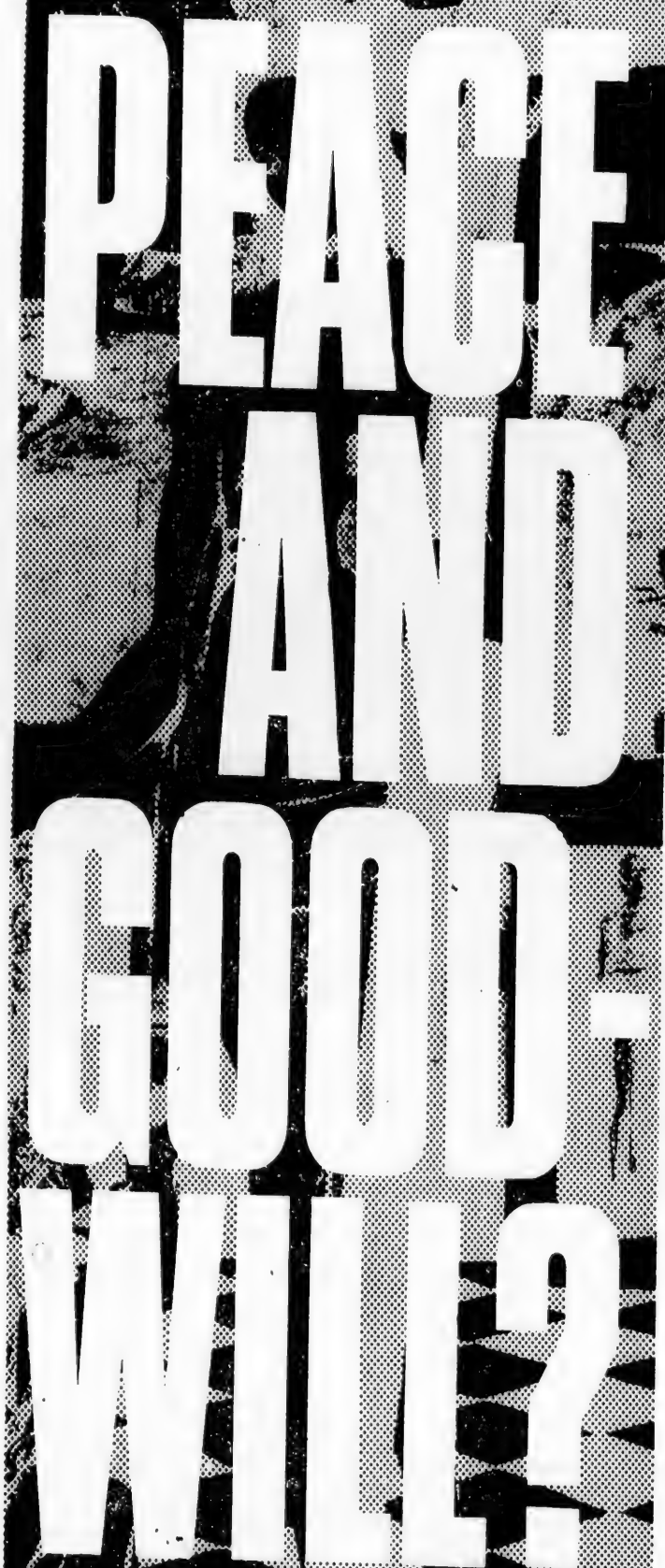
**Christmas, the great
illusion**

Rhodesian crisis

**Socialism or
Christianity**

John Bulls sacred cow

**Immigration and
colour prejudice**



**PEACE
AND
GOOD-
WILL?**

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visitors are cordially invited to every meeting

SPGB Branches

BIRMINGHAM Thursdays 8 pm, "Big Bulls Head", Digbeth. (Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month.) Correspondence: H. J. Grew, Flat 1, 37 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

BLOOMSBURY 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (2nd and 16th Dec.) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

CAMBERWELL Mondays 8.30 pm, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence: H. Baldwin, 26 Trelawn Road, SW2.

DARTFORD 1st and 3rd Fridays in month 8 pm, 3rd Dec. at 7 Cyril Rod, Bexleyheath and 17th Dec. at 32 Ickleton Road, Mottingham, SE9. Correspondence: W. G. Catt at above latter address.

GLASGOW Every Monday 8 pm, 163a Berkeley Street. Correspondence: S. Donaldson, 37 Bellane Street, Glasgow, C3.

HACKNEY 2nd & 4th Wednesdays in month 8 pm, Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St. (off Mare St.), E9. Correspondence: S. Beck, 28 Petherton Road, N5.

ISLINGTON Thursdays 8 pm, Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. (Lecture or discussion after business.) Correspondence: D. Gluck, 201 Adelaide Road, NW3.

KENSINGTON Fridays 8 pm, 55 Meadvale Road, Ealing, W5. (temporarily). Correspondence: R. Cain, 35 Waltham Road, Southall, Middlesex.

KINGSTON upon THAMES Fridays 8 pm, 80 Farm Road, Esher, Surrey. Correspondence: SPGB at above address.

LEWISHAM Mondays 8 pm Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, SE6. Correspondence: SPGB, Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, SE6.

SPGB Groups

BRIGHTON 3rd Friday in month, 18 Nicholas Road. Enquiries: B. Nelson, above address.

BROMLEY For further information contact I. Robertson. Phone Farnborough (Kent) 51719.

KIDDERMINSTER Enquiries: J. Amos, 31 Sion Hill, Broadwaters. Meets 2nd Wednesday in month at 7.30 pm, Station Inn, Fairfield, Comberton Road, Kidderminster.

MANCHESTER Meets last Friday in month at 7.30 pm, The International Centre, George Street. Enquiries: A. Atkinson, 4 St. Martins

For information

BRISTOL Enquiries: J. Flowers, 6 Backfields (Upper York Street), Bristol 12. Tel: 24680.

EARLS COURT & DISTRICT Interesting discussions, regular meetings. Further details: L. Cox, 13 Shelly House, Churchill Gdns., SW1. Tel: VIC 0427.

WSPI Branches

BELFAST Tuesdays 8 pm, 5 Granville Buildings, 53 High Street, Belfast 1.

CENTRAL Details from Secretary, 24 Newington Avenue, Belfast 15.

MID HERTS Meets 1st and 3rd Monday in month at The Red Lion, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage; and 2nd and 4th Monday at the Blackhouse Rooms, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City; 8 pm. Correspondence: Joyce Knight, 30 Broom Close, Hatfield, Herts. Tel.: Hatfield 4802.

NOTTINGHAM 1st Sunday in month (5th Dec.) at 3.30 pm in the Committee Room, Co-operative Hall, Heathcoat Street, Nottingham. Enquiries: G. Hallam, 14 Church Drive, Carrington, Nottingham.

PADDINGTON & MARLEBONE Wednesday 8.30 pm, Royal Oak, York Street, W1 (near Marylebone Rd.). Correspondence: SPGB: 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX 1st and 3rd Thursdays (2nd and 16th Dec.) Co-op Hall, Vange, 8 pm. Correspondence: D. V. Ford, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

SWANSEA Alternate Mondays (6th and 20th Dec. 8 pm, Old Red Cow, High St., Swansea. Correspondence: to Frances Ambridge, Mareng, Brintowd, Llangyfelach, Swansea.

WEST HAM 2nd and 4th Thursdays (9th and 23rd Dec.) in month, 8 pm, Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E12 (Discussions from 9 pm.) Correspondence: D. Deutz, 117 Pettit's Lane, Romford, Essex.

WEST LONDON Fridays 8 pm, Westcott Lodge, Lower Mall, Hammersmith (facing river few minutes from Broadway). Correspondence: B. Warnecke, 158 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Middx.

WOOD GREEN & HORNSEY Fridays 8.30 pm, 17 Dorset Road, N22. Correspondence to: E. L. McKone at above address.

WOOLWICH 2nd and 4th Friday (10th and 24th Dec.) in month, 7.30 pm, Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, SE18. (Discussions at 8 pm.) Correspondence: H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, SE9.

Road, Ashton on Mersey, Sale, Nr. Manchester. Tel. PYR 2404.

OXFORD Regular meetings monthly, contact A. Robertson, 52 Henley St., Oxford. Tel. 47302.

SUNDERLAND Enquiries: P. Toomey, 9 Gillingham Road, Grindon Estate, Sunderland, Co. Durham. Meets 1st Sunday in month, 8 pm, Crown & Thistle, High St., W.

SOUTHEND Regular discussions (Literature available). Enquiries: H. G. Cottis, 19 Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT Enquiries: T. Lord, 288 Church Road, Mitcham.

OLDHAM Wednesdays 7.30 pm, 35 Manchester Street. Enquiries: R. Lees at above address. Tel: MA1 5165.

DUBLIN Regular meetings. Details from Secretary: 5 Seville Terrace, North Strand, Dublin 1.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN holds:

1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8] The SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

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SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets every Tuesday at the SPGB Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. at 7.30 p.m.

Orders for LITERATURE should be sent to the Literature Department, SPGB, at the above address.

CORRESPONDENCE for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary, SPGB, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 (Telephone: Macaulay 3811).

Letters containing POSTAL ORDERS etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, SPGB, at the above address. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to the SPGB.

Articles, correspondence, notices of meetings, etc., for the SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the Socialist Standard Production Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meets 4th Sunday of each month at the Head Office, 5, Granville Buildings, 53, High Street, Belfast 1, at 3.30 p.m.

Peace and Goodwill?

Peace on Earth and Goodwill to all Men.

This Christian slogan, which we hear so often at this time of year, may give some comfort to those who are susceptible to it.

But what is it worth?

Peace On Earth. This year has had no Cuba, no Berlin crisis, nor any other comparable event to make us fear that we were coming to the brink of the third World War. By the standards of modern capitalism, 1965 may seem to have been a peaceful year.

Peaceful, that is, if we ignore the minor outbreaks like the fighting in Dominica, the Congo, Aden and a host of similar places. Peaceful if we forget the flare-ups in the Rann of Kutch and Kashmir. Peaceful if we take no account of the bloody struggle in Vietnam.

What is the cause of these wars? A lack of goodwill? We live in a social system in which competition—between companies, between countries, between groups of countries—goes on all the time. It cannot be avoided—and neither can its consequences. Periodically international competition has to be transferred from the conference halls to the battlefields, adding another war to capitalism's history of bloodshed.

People may protest against this, as many of them have protested against the war in Vietnam. But the protests are futile. Modern war is caused by the nature of capitalist society and the only effective protest we can make against it is to change society into one where the conflicting interests which give rise to war are absent.

Goodwill To All Men. This year we have had the riots in Los Angeles, with their background of simmering revolt against racial oppression. We have had the conflict over Rhodesia, underlaid with clashing economic interests and racial intolerance. We have seen the ever-tightening screw of immigration control in this country, as the Government tried to appease an awakening racism among the British working class. We have had the usual bouts of strikes and other symptoms of social disharmony.

There have, of course, been people to regret this situation.

But again, their protests are futile. Racial theories among the working class can in large part be attributed to their insecurity and to their poverty—to their housing difficulties, their fears for the future of their jobs. It can also be partly explained as a reaction when workers see an easily identifiable minority using already inadequate hospitals, schools and other so-called social services, and to an ever-present desire to find a scapegoat for the problems of life in capitalism.

The competition between one worker and another over a job, or a house, and the strikes and other disputes which go on year after year, are nothing more than a symptom of a basic feature of capitalism—the fact that the vast majority of people have to sell their working abilities in order to live.

In these conditions, the slogan Goodwill To All Men is meaningless.

It is useless to wish that human beings would not behave in anti-social, non-co-operative ways as long as the working class support a social system which encourages, sometimes even forces, them to act in those ways. After all, many of capitalism's most respected leaders have got where they are by displaying anything but goodwill.

The world is in an agony of dispute. Only by a basic change in society—by a social revolution by the world working class to end capitalism and replace it with Socialism—can this agony be ended.

When that revolution comes we shall have lasting peace and goodwill will no longer be a pious slogan, but an established and accepted part of human existence.

Christmas — the great delusion

CHRISTMAS, we shall be told again and again during the next few weeks, is for the children. There is, of course, another side to it, represented by the flood of gaudy rubbish which fills the shops, the big campaigns to sell it, and by the tinsel of nonsense with which the whole thing is embellished. This is not so romantic a vision as that of innocent, starry-eyed kiddies hanging their stockings by the chimney—and it suggests that, whatever enjoyment children may get out of it, Christmas is for a few other people as well.

As the City columns, the advertising agencies, and the trade statistics make clear, Christmas is that thing so beloved of a section of the capitalist class—a spending spree. Millions of people save up, perhaps for the entire year, for this one great splash-out. This is the time when savings vanish, bonuses are blued, hire purchase debts cheerfully taken on. These debts have partly replaced the old loan clubs, which used to have their big pay-out at Christmas. In fact, hire-purchase does no more than the clubs—it simply moves the payment date from one part of the year to another, but this is enough to make it one more piece of evidence for those who are trying to prove that we are all so much better off nowadays.

Christmas is responsible for an amazing expansion of the retail market, lasting for about a month at a time when trade would probably otherwise be slack. For example, the sales of one suburban branch of a famous retail chain bound up to around thirty thousand pounds on Saturdays during December; the manager can almost forecast what his sales figure will be for each weekend. These sales are in the established, non-seasonal goods such as clothes, which simply become more hectic during the Christmas rush. There are plenty of other examples, as people determinedly smoke more cigarettes, eat more food, and of course drink more alcohol during the space of a couple of days than they do in a normal week.

Apart from the established trades, there are the seasonal sales, with an appeal confined exclusively to the Christmas period. Christmas crackers, for instance, are being turned out all the year round; even the men who compose those dreadful jokes and mottoes are hard at it months in advance. The result of all this is that about one hundred million crackers are sold at Christmas, some of them abroad.

We must not forget Christmas cards. The first of these was sent in 1843; the idea did not catch on for about twenty years and since then the market has steadily expanded until now something over six hundred million cards, worth about 15 million, are sent each Christmas. This is good business for the firms which make the cards (one of whose executives said a little while ago "We are in the sentiment business") and for the Post Office, who rake in something like £8 million in postage on the cards, not to mention the extra revenue on Christmas parcels, greetings telegrams, 'phone calls and the rest.

It is anyone's guess, how much of the spending at Christmas goes in a genuine effort to have, or to give someone else, a good time. A lot of the drinks, presents and smokes are sent as bribes (there is no other words for it) from the directors of one firm to those of another which, they hope, will buy their products. A host of calendars, diaries, packs of cards, are produced as advertising material. Some Christmas cards are sent out by firms as reminders that they are still in business—and magnificent pieces of work some of them are.

Apart from the business world, there is no doubt that a lot

of money is spent at Christmas in an effort to impress other people. We have all seen—perhaps some of us have actually received—those Christmas cards which have so obviously been selected with the motive of convincing us that the senders are more wealthy and important than they actually are. We have all read the advertisements which say that no card is really gracious unless it has the senders' name and address printed on the inside. It is an unpleasant fact that the acquisitive nature of capitalism gives strength to this sort of appeal; for those who fall for it, sending Christmas cards is a highly competitive business, in which a defeat has to smoulder for a whole year before the chance for revenge comes round again.

The fact is that Christmas is in some ways a time for people to show their less attractive side—and for the massed forces of commercialism to cash in on the situation, ruthlessly and to the full, with the only justification they need—in the end they have more profit than if they had not played up to peoples' snobbery, their insecurity and their distorted conception of the world in which they struggle to live.

In other ways, too, commerce turns the screw at Christmas. A walk around any department store reveals an astounding variety of junk which is being sold at equally astounding prices. There are toys which are dangerous, or which will not last from Christmas to Boxing Day in the hands of any child. There are cakes of soap and bath cubes, stuck in a fancy box and covered in cellophane, selling for much more than their usual price. There is a bewildering mass of tinsel, plastic and coloured paper—and all the time there is the drive to sell, sell, sell for a Merry Christmas.

Yes, this is an enormous, briefly inflated, market; each year the note circulation leaps up to accommodate it. (Last year it increased from £2,583 million in the first week in November to £2,766 million in Christmas week.) The firms which hope to cash in on the boom lay their plans a long time ahead. From the summer months onwards, they are discussing and deciding on their advertising campaigns, their special wrappings and what they like to call their "presentation". There is always the temptation for them to try to get in first, which they have to resist for fear of opening their campaign too early. But none of them can afford to leave it too late—they have such an awful lot to sell. So it is not uncommon for us to be able to buy Christmas decorations, wrappings, cards and so on in October; and before Guy Fawkes night there are not a few big stores with their Father Christmas, usually an unemployed stage extra, to induce people to buy by working on their children.

Many people complain that the Christmas sales campaign starts too early. But as the market is stimulated to grow, and as it grows, so will the effort to exploit it. This might mean an even longer sales drive in the future—wasn't there a story about a business man who said that Christmas was good business as long as they kept religion out of it?

He must have been an ungrateful fellow; religion, after all, does him many a good turn. In any case, as we point out elsewhere in this issue, Christmas has nothing to do with Christianity; the Christians simply pinched it to suit their own purposes. What more natural, then, than that the capitalist social system, which is so faithfully supported by Christianity, should itself adopt Christianity's most important festival for its own ends?

It was the Industrial Revolution which was responsible for reducing the old twelve days' holiday at Christmas to a single day. The rise of capitalism meant that masses of people sold

their working ability to the master class by time—and time spent on holidays was time not spent producing the masters profits in the factory or the mill or the mine. Capitalism, with the help of its religious lackeys, built up a massive condemnation of what it called idleness. And among other things it destroyed the ancient Twelve Days of Christmas.

More recently, capitalism has reduced the opposition to Christmas to a handful. Nobody now holds the opinion expressed in a Puritan pamphlet of 1656, that Christmas was "... the old Heathen's Feasting Day ... the Papists' Massing Day, the Superstitious Man's Idol Day ... Satan's That Adversary's Working Day" but until fairly recently there was a solid, articulate opposition to it. This is now all but silent, as the festival has been blown up into a vast, commercialised orgy of selling and consumption, one of the many working class Festivals of Delusion.

The great Delusion of Christmas is that dormant within us there is the Christmas Spirit—a gentle compound of benevolence, co-operation and goodwill which is roused at this time of year by the appeal of religion. When we are possessed of the Spirit we are wise and generous and loving; if only (says the Delusion) we could keep it up all the year round the problems of the world would be solved. If we would only cast out the Scrooges among us (and we all have our own idea of who Scrooge may be) and live by the Christmas Spirit there will be no more poverty, or war, or oppression.

This is no joke; the Delusion is powerful. It brought both sides out of their trenches to fraternise in No Man's Land in 1914 (officially, that was the last time they did it). It inspires countless maudlin speeches at office parties and family gatherings. It runs through the entire Queen's Speech on Christmas Day. It is powerful—and it is dangerous.

For the Delusion fosters the idea that the troubles of capitalism are caused by anything but the essential nature of the system. It promotes the nonsense that the world today is a fearsome, disturbed place because people are bad and that if only people were better the world would be a better place. It encourages people to think in terms of good and bad spirit, when they should be asking themselves why they behave as they do, and why the world is as it is. And as a final irony, the Christmas Delusion even encourages some people to think that there is something inconsistent in the determined way that capitalism exploits Christmas for all it is worth.

To start at the right end of this problem, we should first of all realise that there is nothing essentially wrong (or right, for that matter) with most people. It is the conditions of living and working under capitalism which largely make them what they are. Capitalism is constantly working out ways of exploiting us more efficiently, which means more intensely. It is always pushing us that bit harder, crowding us in that much more, making us into that much more of a cut-throat in the competitive scramble for the better job, the bigger house, the easier money.

In these conditions, people live at an intense pressure. Events which in themselves are trivial—a telephone which rings, a child who behaves like a child—are an intolerable strain. It is only when we relax, when we put aside the worry of making ends meet, when we try to live like human beings, that we begin to get a better perspective on it all. Perhaps this is what a lot of people do at Christmas. Some of them, for a couple of days at any rate, actually succeed, and they put it all down to the Christmas Spirit.

The big laugh about this—if anyone can stand another joke at this time of year—is that if the working class really grasped the implications of this they would take a hard, sober look at capitalism and see it for the wretched way of living that it is. That old chap Scrooge had a word which aptly describes the delusions of capitalism, its cynicism and its hypocrisy. Humbug.

IVAN.

Christmas, past and present

THE festival we know as Christmas is far older than Christianity. It is one of the institutions that the early Christians adopted from their pagan rivals.

During its teething years it was touch and go whether Christianity survived or succumbed to its foremost rival, Mithraism. The Mithraists were sun worshippers and they combined a solemn fertility ritual with aspirations after moral purity and a hope of immortality. The main Mithraic festival was held at the winter solstice, that time from which, each year, the days began to lengthen and the sun to arouse from its winter rest with the promise of a fertile springtime. The focal point of the ritual was a portrayal of a virgin giving birth to a new sun.

The Christian gospels give no hint of the date of the birth of their Christ and, accordingly, the early Christian Church did not celebrate it. The Christian priests were severe men and woman who urged their followers to live equally severe lives of work, abstinence and charity. But they found that many of their adherents took part in the solemnities and festivities of the Mithraists and, if they wished to win and retain converts, they would have to pander to peoples' hearty liking for festivity and pageantry. Accordingly, the Christians of Egypt came to regard January 6th (by the Julian calendar) as the date of the nativity of their Christ and the custom of commemorating his birth on that date spread until, by the beginning of the fourth century, it was widely adopted in the east.

The western Christian church, probably influenced by the Roman festival of Saturnalia and the northern Yule, was the first to adopt December 25th, the day of the winter solstice, for their Christmas celebrations. The idea spread until, at an assembly held at Antioch in the year 375 A.D., the eastern church accepted the same date and officially changed from January 6th to December 25th.

As well as taking over the date of the pagan festival the Christians absorbed many of the heathen rites and symbols, such as the virgin birth, the burning of candles and the use of seasonable greenery for decoration.

By the middle ages Christmas was firmly established as the foremost annual Christian festival. The period of ritual and celebration extended over the whole twelve days from December 25th to Epiphany. It was a time of feasting, music, dancing, mumming, boisterous fun, and horseplay with the religious significance prominent in, but not dominating, the festivities. The twelve days ended with a ceremonial return to work on what was then known as Plough Monday.

A number of religious symbols from different parts of the world had become grafted on to the Christmas ritual. The mistletoe, considered a sign of fertility in some areas, became part of the Christmas festivity. The yule log, originally cut from the oak tree on which mistletoe was supposed to grow prolifically, became the traditional fuel for the occasion. Saint Nicholas of Russia, who died in 350 A.D., was eventually adopted by the Greek church and legends illustrating his benevolence and good nature were handed down to create the image of the Santa Claus of later generations.

The sixteenth century saw a growth in early capitalist industry and the first pressures being applied to abridge the period of Christmas festivity. Early restrictions had little effect in agricultural areas but it was easier to keep the poverty-stricken wage workers of the towns with their noses to the grindstone. For them a long holiday meant unbearable privations.

In England, effective political action to subdue Christmas festivities came with the Puritan revolution of the seventeenth century. During the period of the so-called Commonwealth fun and frivolity was severely frowned upon and even the churches were closed on Christmas day.

The next two hundred years witnessed the complete commercialisation of the festival. Capitalism drew each aspect of the institution into its maw. The spontaneous games and recreations were gradually replaced by organised entertainment; the amateur religious players and mummers made way for paid entertainers; communal self-help dried up and a smug, dignity-destroying charity took its place.

Nineteenth century sentimental writers, like Dickens and Kingsley, focussed attention on the pitiable plight of the working class after the Industrial Revolution. They were of the "change-of-heart" school of reformers, urging employers to be a little more charitable to their employees. Dickens best depicted the attitude in his *A Christmas Carol* wherein he portrays a mean and grasping employer, scared by a bad dream into becoming a charitable man on Christmas day and a little less mean one in the days following, to the benefit of his happiness and at the expense of his bank account.

Practically all of the Holy days of the middle ages have been eliminated. May day, as a workers' holiday, has been moved to a Sunday in May where it does not interfere with the working week, but the tradition of Christmas, shorn of most of its religious significance, dies hard. It lives on because it offers an attractive expansion of the market for innumerable goods. Workers save up for much of the year to have a spending spree and some festivity over the Christmas period. New symbols are introduced from time to time to attract these hard earned savings into different pockets. Christmas trees were an innovation, developed in this country from a German custom, during the reign of Queen Victoria following her marriage to Albert of Saxe Coburg. Christmas cards are also a comparatively recent profit making introduction.

The attitude of capitalist politicians to the festive season is often amusingly contradictory. In 1939, with a war getting under way, the Chancellor of the Exchequer broadcast a plea to save money to keep prices down, a minister at the Board of Trade called for a little spending to keep trade on the move, a state Forestry official announced that plenty of Christmas trees would be available as usual, firms with gift goods to market advertised them up to the hilt, and writers in

the press urged people not to bankrupt patriotic business men who were doing their best to pay the costs of the war.

Social institutions are measured by their adaptability to a commodity producing society and are fostered or discouraged according to their usefulness to a profit making system.

Noble sentiments are prostituted and even the charity advocated by Christians is harnessed to the capitalist cart and whipped up with the gift-giving pleas and advertisements at Christmas.

WATERS.

Christianity or Socialism

THIS month Christians celebrate the birth of their Christ. It is therefore appropriate once again to examine the Christian religion and its relations to socialism and the working class.

Christianity is a comparatively recent religion but it is thick with the debris of man's earlier superstitions. The pagan influence on the Christmas festival is especially well marked, for December 25th was a holy day long before Jesus Christ was even thought of. Primitive man worshipped the sun because the course of his life was dominated by the yearly round of that planet in the heavens. This practice was wide spread but especially in northern countries mid-December was thought to be a critical time, as the days became shorter and shorter and the sun itself weaker. Great bonfires were lit to give the sun god strength and, when it became apparent that the shortest day had passed, there was great rejoicing. Thus the Roman winter-solstice festival, held on December 25th in connection with the worship of the sun-god Mithra, was known as the birthday of the unconquered sun-god.

December 25th was not generally introduced into the Western Church as Christmas day until the fourth century and it was even later before it was accepted in the Eastern Church. Several Christian sects had previously fancied the 24th or 25th of April as a suitable "holy" period—thus arbitrarily connecting Christ's birth with the vernal equinox rather than the winter-solstice—while still other factions chose alternative solar festivals. However, St. Chrysostom (5th century) gives a very practical reason why December 25th was to be preferred. "On this day the birthday of Christ was lately fixed at Rome, in order that while the heathens were occupied in their profane ceremonies the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed."

Man's consciousness is a reflection of his material environment. While he was struggling to find his feet in the universe it was understandable that he should interpret phenomena which he could not comprehend in supernatural terms but, in the twentieth century, such irrational relics from the past can be of no value to the working class.

Christians have argued against the materialist conception of history by claiming that the driving force behind the universe is a god's will and that, while everything else may be subject to change, God and his religion remain constant. Yet the briefest examination of Christ and his theories shows him clearly as a product of his times. For example, he plainly shared the then common belief that disease was due to infesta-

tion with demons and he told his followers, "In my name ye shall cast our devils". Again, religion has always been the willing tool of the ruling class. The church today holds chattel slavery to be immoral. But when Constantine the Great accepted the Christian religion the pope of the time received him with acclamation and no one suggested to him the need to surrender his slaves, of which he held thousands. Similarly the Christians' god today dutifully reflects the interests of capital. Thus for hundreds of years the popes excommunicated those who put their money out at usury and denied them Christian burial because of this "grievous sin". Yet, strangely, since Pope Benedict XIV's condemnation in 1745, God has not moved his spokesmen to breathe one word against this practice.

We are told that the Bible is God's word. This being the case, his laconic message could not be clearer—"Thou shalt not kill". The record of the Christian churches in this century alone illustrates that they have never hesitated to take sides in Capitalism's bloody quarrels. In the first world war the workers were urged to slaughter one another with God on their lips: "God of our Fathers . . . Be thou the rampart of our costs, the frontline of the battlefield". And in the second world war Christians intoned in harmony with capitalist interests in both Germany and Britain. "You have every reason to say prayers for the Führer. May God preserve him, because we need an eternal Germany." (Reported in the *Daily Mail*, May 9th, 1944.)

On the other hand in the *Church of England Newspaper*, February 23rd, 1940, we find a thoroughly English god rallying under the Union Jack: "It is to the living God therefore we must look for deliverance in the present hour. He it is Who delivered our fathers from the 'Invincible' Spanish Armada; He appeared on our behalf in 1914-18; and He will help us now if we call upon Him with a true heart."

Capitalism is a dirty business, based as it is upon the misery of the majority of mankind. But it is well served by its priesthood, always ready with the facile lie and the glib distortion to endorse the actions of the bourgeoisie and persuade the workers that their present lot is part of some unalterable, God-given system.

Clearly then the Christian religion is a most versatile creed. Is it possible that it could be adapted again to serve the interests of a socialist society? The answer is no, for at all times Christianity and Socialism are contradictory. Socialism involves a rejection of leadership and the determination that the workers themselves must achieve socialism. Conversely, Christianity is rooted in a blind faith in leaders, both worldly and supernatural. The priests urge their flocks to remain servile and reap the blessings of poverty. They say that it is not up to the workers to consider the system which robs them, throws them into unemployment, subjects them to war and disease; that it God's province. The Bishop of Barcelona

orders: "Have confidence in your Bishops, who have received from God the mission of commanding: learn to obey . . . do not change a word of the directives that the Holy Church gives you through the Bishops. Be obedient!"

Again, within capitalist society there is a continual class struggle which can only be abolished by the establishment of a classless society—socialism. But Christians believe that there is a harmony of interests under capitalism. Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical on Labour asserted: "If one man hires out to another his strength or his industry, he does this in order to receive in return the means of livelihood, with the intention of acquiring a real right, not merely to his wage, but also to the free disposal of it . . . Socialists . . . strike at the liberty of every wage-earner, for they deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages." The good pope has a point—in that socialism will certainly deprive everyone of the "liberty" of wage-slavery. However, with typical Christian charity (towards the bourgeoisie) he chooses to overlook the fact that under capitalism the workers are forced to sell their labour power to the owners of the means of living. This is not, as the pope suggests, a case of fair exchange but is based upon the appropriation of the surplus value created by the workers by the master class.

Yet there are those who still maintain that Socialism and Christianity can somehow be synthesised, given the right leader as a catalyst. The Labour Party has always taken this line and the so-called Christian Socialist Movement lingers on, desperately trying to create some sort of comprehensible amalgam out of conflicting idealist and materialist theories. Their analysis of capitalism is based upon the contention that it is an "evil" system, rooted in sin. But in their literature we find: "Capitalism has served mankind by accumulating capital, so making large scale production possible and increasing wealth generally . . ." Thus these Christian gentlemen admit that what they call "sin" and "evil" have been of service to man. This inconsistency is the inevitable result of trying to accommodate Christianity and Socialism—the utopian and the scientific.

Christmas is supposed to be a time of good cheer, when the harsh reality of this world is briefly forgotten. But it is impossible to disregard capitalism even at this time of the year. We address our Christmas message to the working class, about to enjoy yet another wretched holiday under capitalism—the system they chose to perpetuate when they voted for the Labour and Tory parties last October. That man of the people, the sanctimonious Harold Wilson, has gone on record as talking of "our quest for the Kingdom of God on earth". After one year of Labour government the conclusion is inevitable: God and Mr. Wilson are forced to administer capitalism in the interests of the ruling class as ever. But then Mr. Wilson is not a socialist—and neither is God.

J.C.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION SUBSCRIBE FOR SOCIALIST STANDARD

John Bull's sacred cow

IT is pathetically easy to poke fun at Royalty. Look at any copy of *Private Eye* for the yobly kind of satire, or "This England" in the *New Statesman* for authenticated stories about incidents such as the removal of lavatory signs "to avoid embarrassment" during a royal visit. The trouble with such side-swipes, however, is that they leave the basic nature of the institution unexamined and untouched. (Indeed, for the satire industry to survive it is imperative that this butt of its jokes remains unchanged.)

A more difficult, but also more useful, job is to define the exact position of the Queen and the Royal Family in relation to the rest of society. For until we have an understanding of the total situation, we have neither the ability, nor do we grasp the need, to change the social structure.

The first and most obvious point is that the Royal Family are members of the capitalist class. That is, they own so much wealth, in the form of vast estates, that it is economically unnecessary for them to work. This means, for example, that they can enjoy themselves at Ascot and similar places as often as they please, without having to pinch an afternoon off from the office or to wait for their week of night-shift to come round (Not that most of us could afford to go to Ascot even under these conditions). It also means that, like the rest of the capitalist class, the Royal Family can have the very best of everything without having to worry about the price.

However, the position of the Queen and her family within this ruling class is, of course, quite unique—and in a paradoxical way which her title would not lead us to believe. Whereas some capitalists, when they tire of Cannes and caviar, may wish to turn their unoccupied minds to politics it is expected of Royalty that they should be above this sordid fray. The Duke of Edinburgh will be tolerated when he tells the workers in industry to "pull their finger out" but if he starts giving more specific advice on British Foreign policy he hits the national headlines.

As regards the Queen, too, we may agree with the official statement:

"In law, she is the head of the executive, an integral part of the legislature . . . In practice, as a result of a long evolutionary process during which the absolute power of the monarchy has been progressively reduced, the Queen acts only on the advice of her ministers, which she cannot constitutionally ignore. She reigns but she does not rule. The United Kingdom is governed by Her Majesty's Government in the name of the Queen." (*Britain. An Official Handbook*, H.M.S.O. 1965.) Stripped of its verbiage this means that despite all the traditional bull, the Queen is merely a rubber stamp.

In this respect the Royal Family provide a glaring example of the redundancy and strictly parasitic nature of the capitalist class in general. Not only do they perform no useful social function but they do not even have to defend their own class interests. Most capitalists choose not to go into politics, and a large part of managing capitalism is willingly undertaken by political careerists from the working class.

Ambassadors

Now it has been argued that the Monarchy does perform a useful function on the grounds that a Monarch can create more good-will the world over than a mere president. Philip and Elizabeth, it is said, are worth their weight in gold as unofficial British ambassadors. But what do their lengthy

foreign tours, with all their enormous expense, really achieve? Good-will soon gets flattened under the steam-roller of political reality, as numerous conflicts within the Commonwealth have shown. The fact that both India and Pakistan owe some sort of allegiance to the same monarch does not prevent them from tearing each other's guts out. And even the great love which the Europeans are reputed to have for Her Britannic Majesty could not get Britain into the Common Market.

But even if it is conceded that these ambassadorial missions have a certain measure of success, that the foreigners warm to us and as a result are more inclined to Buy British—what relevance does this have for those of us whose lives are taken up in earning enough to go on living? It simply means that the wealth which we produce but our employers own may be more easily disposed of on the world's markets—without this necessarily benefiting us in any way. Thus if the Royal Family can be said to have any function at all, it is that of being public relations officers for the British capitalist class. The latter, after all, are the only people who have anything to sell abroad.

Finance

As for the "reward" (one could hardly call it wages) which members of the Royal Family get for going on long holidays and reading an occasion speech, it certainly proves them to be worth their weight in sterling. The Civil List, the amount of money given every year to the Royal Family, is made up as follows:

The privy purse of the Queen ...	£60,000
Duke of Edinburgh ...	£40,000
Queen Mother ...	£70,000
Duke of Gloucester ...	£35,000
Princess Margaret ...	£15,000
Salaries of Royal Household ...	£185,000
Household Expenses ...	£121,800
Alms and bounty ...	£13,200
Supplementary provision ...	£95,000
TOTAL:	£635,000

(*Statesman's Year Book*, 1965/6).

It would perhaps be more fitting if members of the Royal Family stood up for the rest of the population when the National Anthem is played, to show that they appreciate such benevolence. They are given more every year than most of us earn in a lifetime, and in effect they are guaranteed an annual pools win without even filling in a coupon.

As if this were not enough Sir Charles Petrie, in a bigoted analogy for the institution of the monarchy (*The Modern British Monarchy*), laments that certain ladies of the high aristocracy are not included in the list of annual pensions and are forced to "sell their trinkets at Sotheby's." He is quite blind to the fact that most non-aristocratic ladies haven't got a single trinket they would be able to sell at Sotheby's, nor will they ever save enough to be able to buy one. In essence his statement contains the same absurdity as one made recently by another Royalist: "The Royal Family are really quite poor, you know. They have so many palaces to maintain."

A second bogus point which Sir Charles borrows from *The Times* and uses in his book is that since the Exchequer receives more in taxes from the Royal Family than it pays

out for the Civil List, "the nation makes a profit out of the Royal Family." Here again the argument conveniently ignores one side of the facts. For example, we should hardly feel it was the whole truth to say that the nation makes a profit out of someone like Charles Clore on the grounds that he pays taxes and receives no annual pension. We would conclude, naturally, that he must be receiving from somewhere even larger amounts of money than he pays in taxes. And since he is not a member of the employed class his income must be from shares, interest, property and the like.

Moreover, it is quite wrong to say that taxes are a profit of the "nation" in the sense of the majority of people in the country. The taxes go to the government, which uses them in a variety of ways to support and maintain the capitalist machine.

We can only assume that this is the case with the Royal Family, whose income derives from their vast estates and property. This brings us back to our first point: the Royal Family, with all the special and unique features we have considered, are members of the socially superfluous capitalist class.

Changing attitude

What, now, of current attitudes to this archaic institution in an archaic form of society? The satire we noted earlier is perhaps symptomatic of a more critical and sceptical view with regard to royalism. Most of us have been caught up in the stampedes out of the cinema at closing time and some circuits have given up playing the National Anthem at all.

Such attitudes are preferable to an unquestioning reverence, but they do not go nearly far enough. They do not point the way to any effective form of action; they amount at

most to grudging resentment, and at their most innocuous merely to condescending amusement. This is inevitably the case as long as one institution of capitalism is considered in isolation from the rest of society.

For this reason there is no reason to support republicans, who want to abolish the monarchy in favour of an elected head of state such as a president. Presidents command as much extravagant luxury as kings, and top politicians pig themselves to the same excessive extent as Henry VIII (See the photos of the Lord Mayor's Banquet any year). In short, as long as there is a ruling and a subject class, the top ranks of society will always enjoy the same order of privileges.

Conclusion

Men have come a long way since they believed that Royal Privilege was divinely given, but they have not yet realised that this and every other kind of privilege rests in the last analysis on the private ownership of the means of life.

When they do realise this and take the necessary steps to establish common ownership of and free access to wealth (and that won't be until you do), then there will consequently cease to be classes, ranks and hierarchies in society. There will be no Your Majesties, Your Graces or Your Honours, and any respect which individuals command will be based entirely on their merits as useful contributors to the world-wide co-operative community.

Finally, to those people who anxiously ask "What would happen to the Queen in socialism?" We can only say this: as we have shown, she would cease to be a queen and a member of the capitalist class. The only person who can give you more information than that is Elizabeth Mountbatten.

K. GRAHAM.

WHAT IS PATRIOTISM?

This noble impulse of social solidarity is the common inheritance of all mankind. But being a powerful social force it has lent itself to exploitation. Therefore with the development of class rule this great impulse is made subordinate to the class interests of the rulers. It becomes debased and perverted to definite anti-social ends. As soon as the people become a slave class "the land of their fathers" is theirs no more. Patriotism to them becomes a fraudulent thing. The "country" is that of their masters alone. Nevertheless, the instinct of loyalty to the community is too deep-seated to be eradicated so easily, and it becomes a deadly weapon in the hands of the rulers against the people themselves.

Capitalism, therefore, stands as the barrier the destruction of which will not only set free the productive forces of society for the good of all, but will also liberate human solidarity and brotherhood from the narrow confines of nationality and patriotism. Only victorious labour can make true the simple but pregnant statement: "mankind are my brethren, the world is my country." Patriot-

ism and nationalism as we know them will then be remembered only as artificial restrictions of men's sympathy and mutual help; as obstacles to the expansion of the human mind; as impediments to the needful and helpful development of human unity and co-operation; as bonds that bound men to slavery; as incentives that set brothers at each others' throats.

Despite its shameless perversion by a robber class the great impulse to human solidarity is by no means dead. Economic factors give it an ever firmer basis, and in the Socialist movement it develops apace. Even the hellish system of individualism, with its doctrine of every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost, has been unable to kill it. And in the great class struggle of the workers against the drones, of the socially useful against the socially pernicious, in this last great struggle for the liberation of humanity from wage slavery, the great principle of human solidarity, based upon the necessities of today and impelled by the deep-seated instincts of the race, will come to full fruition and win its supreme historical battle.

From *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, December, 1915

CENTRAL LONDON MEETINGS

A reminder that the Bloomsbury Branch Sunday evening meetings are being held at the Asquith Room, 2 Soho Square, London, W.1 (close to Tottenham Court Road Tube Station). The series of lectures is very interesting, the room warm and comfortable—a well-worth Sunday evening venue for members and friends. As with all Party meetings, questions and discussion are welcome. So please note the dates and time—7.30 pm for 8 pm. and bring as many friends as possible.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ATLAS OF SOVIET AFFAIRS
by R. N. Taaffe & R. C. Kingsbury
Methuen, 7s. 6d.

subscribe now
for the
socialist standard

Heil Banda!

The tireless supporters of African nationalist movements will doubtless have been glad to hear that Dr. Hastings Banda, who was once one of their heroes, and who was once said to be a gentle, humane man, and who is now Prime Minister of Malawi, is running true to form.

Next July, Malawi will become a Republic and Dr. Banda's party—the Malawi Congress Party—is getting ready for the event.

First, they nominated (who else?) Dr. Banda as their candidate for the Presidency. Then they accepted some proposals which make it clear that Dr. Banda does not intend his Presidential rule to be restricted by the sort of checks which are on the leaders of a much maligned, imperialist country like the United States.

The Constitution the Malawi Congress Party accepted, and which will probably become law, lays it down that the

country will become a one-party state with a President who is both the Head of State and the Head of the Government.

There are, of course, no prizes for guessing which party will be the only one allowed to exist and who will be the all-powerful President—or dictator, as he will be known in places where speech is still comparatively free.

This is typical of many of the new African states which are now under one-party dictatorships, run by the men who came to power on a promise to bring freedom to a people governed by a foreign nation.

On what grounds are the new dictatorships excused? Dr. Banda told his party's convention: "It does not matter whether there is a dictator or not as long as the people choose the dictator"—which is exactly the argument used by, among others, Adolf Hitler.

NEWS IN REVIEW

This is not a far-fetched parallel. A couple of weeks after the convention, Dr. Banda revealed what sort of dictatorship he hopes the Malawi people will choose. Commenting on the trial of the "rebel" Medson Silombela, he said: "I know he is going to be found guilty. What sort of judge can acquit him? After that you can come and watch him swing."

Life under British capitalism is tough enough, but at least political leaders do not make it their business to go around pronouncing verdict and sentence before a trial is ended.

The rising capitalism of Africa are no better than those of the older, more established countries.

The experience of Malawi—and of Ghana and Kenya—should be remembered, the next time there is an appeal to support a nationalist movement which aims to replace one type of suppression with another.

Failure of the incomes and prices policy

"Mr. Brown," wrote William Rees-Mogg in the *Sunday Times* last April, "Plough the Sands." He was referring to the government's incomes policy, to the incomes policies which have gone before, and to the near-certainty of Brown's policy failing.

Well, the policy has been running for about a year. We have had the Declaration of Intent, we have Mr. Jones and his Prices and Incomes Board, we have the Early Warning System and the TUC's capitulation to it.

And we have Mr. Brown. Talking.

What else have we had?

Prices, we know, have gone up. What about wages?

The Motor Agents' Association have agreed with the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Transport and General Workers' Union that from January 1st the basic rates of about 300,000 workers in the motor retail and repair trades will go up by between 14 and 16 per cent.

Figures are pliable things but on any argument this rise is considerably more than the government's hoped-for limit of between 3 and 3½ per cent. a year.

This is only one detail in the picture. In April the Scottish plumbers got a rise

of 11 per cent.; in August Trustee Savings Bank Staff got 8.1 per cent.

Between last December and September this year, the Index of Hourly Wage Rates, taking a base figure of 100 for the year 1956, rose from 152.2 to 160.2—an increase of 8 per cent.

These developments have provoked Mr. Callaghan, the Chancellor of the Exchequer to confess that he is "... disappointed with the way in which the incomes policy has gone so far."

There is really no reason for Mr. Callaghan feeling like this. Any incomes policy will always run up against a basic feature of the capitalist social system which the government are trying to run.

Capitalism imposes upon the mass of people the condition that they have to sell their working abilities in order to live. In its barest essentials—that is, in times of slump—this is a matter of living. At other times it is more a matter of defending and improving living standards.

Here is the root cause of the disputes over wages and working conditions. It is inevitable that the working class will struggle to get the most they can from their employers, and that their employers will protect their own interests.

Since the war, conditions in this country have generally favoured the

working class in their struggle. A persistent shortage of labour has given strength to many wage claims.

Thus, although the trade unions may formally accept an obligation to restrain wages, the very conditions of their existence force them to do the opposite, for their members would hardly agree to hold wages down when they could push them up.

The assistant secretary of the TGWU showed how the trade unions justify themselves in this situation when he commented on the rises awarded to the motor men: "In fact, this was consolidating local wage rates into a national agreement and was merely formalising what already existed."

This is what Mr. George Woodcock once called "a bit of good old TUC", but in essence it is a fairly common sort of statement.

Whatever policy the government may try to impose, and the unions accept, the battle to consolidate and to improve wages will go on. It is simply part of capitalism.

Other incomes policies have failed in the past and Brown's policy, brought in to such deafening fanfares, is failing now. However many times they are ploughed, the dead sands will remain.

Crisis in Rhodesia

The crisis in Rhodesia showed—if indeed it was necessary to do so—that whatever else we may be short of there is still plenty of nonsense being talked.

We heard, for example, talk about our "kith and kin" in Rhodesia, which suggests that there is a sacred, family tie between British workers and the Rhodesian ruling class. Perhaps this propaganda was effective: it was reported that the British government hesitated about sending troops to Rhodesia because they feared something like a repetition of the Curragh Mutiny in 1914.

We heard lots about the "rights" of majorities and the "legalities" of Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence, as if such things are immutable and are not ignored and defied when it suits a governments' purposes to do so. Human "rights" have had such a rough time of it during the past few years that it is surprising that any government still dares to speak in their name.

And, of course, we had the familiar racist nonsense, about the supposed inferiority of the African, and his inherent inability to behave in the same way as the established proletariat of the older capitalist countries.

There were signs that the decision to make a UDI was not reached without considerable argument in Salisbury. Mr. Smith prevaricated for a long time, after originally giving the impression that the

break was due in the immediate future.

Perhaps this was a result of the arm-twisting by the British government. But whatever the short term effect of the sanctions, there is every reason to think that in the long run Rhodesia will weather the storm. It will find other outlets for its produce, and reach other arrangements on its international finances to replace those which have been ended. Indeed, there may even be some sort of tie-up between Rhodesia and some of the Negro African states. Malawi for one made it clear that it did not favour the imposition of sanctions, which might mean that the two countries will get together over a trade deal.

Mr. Wilson was at some pains to establish the fact that Labour's policy was a continuation of the Tories'. This did not prevent Mr. Heath getting what advantage he could from the situation, by making the familiar charge that, although there was no difference in principle between the two parties, Labour were bungling the job.

This basic agreement indicates that the British ruling class as a whole, whatever Lord Salisbury may think, realises what will be the result of a UDI. The present Rhodesian government can probably stay in power only by imposing a system similar to what exists in South Africa.

This will have its repercussions in terms of sabotage and other forms of violence, and in continual unrest. It will

hold back Rhodesia's development into a modern capitalist nation. This may suit the interests of the Rhodesian farmers, but the country's industrialists, and the capitalists abroad who have money invested there, must take a different attitude.

They are more likely to be in favour of accepting the inevitable and salvaging what they can, as they have done in the other newly independent states of Africa.

If a Negro-dominated Rhodesia is inevitable—however far into the future it maybe—what is likely to follow? There will probably be changes in the white landholdings. Some of them may be split up and distributed to Africans; so called Land Reform often accompanies the success of nationalist revolts.

There will also be changes in Rhodesia's social structure. The tribal chiefs will decline in power, to be replaced by a new ruling class, mostly with coloured skins. The African people will be developed into a fully-fledged proletariat.

And, if recent history is any guide, Rhodesia may well become another Negro dictatorship, with the new government's opponents persecuted, exiled, even murdered.

Who can say that this is preferable to the white settlers' dictatorship under Mr. Smith? For the people of Rhodesia the outlook is unpromising.

PROFIT IN RUSSIA: A POSTSCRIPT

Those who have been following the discussion of this question in our columns may be interested in two further pieces of information. The first is another article by Liberman, in the *Sunday Times* of October 10th. As to the origin of profits Liberman repeats the same incorrect arguments he gave to the *Daily Worker* correspondent. But there are two passages worth comment.

Arguing against the suggestion that Russia is "returning" to profit-making, he points out:

"Our enterprises have been driving for cash profits since 1921, that is, for more than 40 years."

Quite! Since it developed there, capitalism has never ceased to exist in Russia. For most of this period, however, cash profits played a minor role in regulating production. Liberman complains:

"The significance of profit in the Soviet Union was reduced because the law of value was ignored to a certain extent. This law was incorrectly interpreted by certain Soviet economists as a sort of unpleasant hang-over of capitalism which supposedly had to be got rid of as quickly as possible."

Naturally the law of value will disappear in socialist society, where production will be for use. Marxian terminology, which by a peculiar historical accident had been inherited by the rulers of Russia, has proved a nuisance to them on this point. At first their theoreticians argued that the law of value would continue to exist in the transition from capitalism to socialism but would wither away before the advent of socialism. These are the economists Liberman criticises. This was changed in the early 1940's when it was baldly announced that in future

the law of value would continue to operate in a socialist society! Liberman is merely a product of this change: perhaps he genuinely doesn't know that the Marxian concepts he uses apply exclusively to capitalist society.

The second item is from *The Times* of October 18th under the headline LOANS TO REPLACE GRANTS IN RUSSIA. Garbuzov, the Finance Minister, suggested, says the report:

"financing a substantial share of the nation's investment, possibly as much as half, by long-term bank loans instead of outright interest-free grants out of the Government budget as in the past." This change by encouraging the State enterprises to make enough profit to be able to pay the interest charges would bring the financing of the nationalised industries in Russia nearer to the British system.

A.L.B.

The passing show

You and your job

Have you what is connomously known as a "good job"—one that has "gd. sal. to right person and excel. conds." as the small ads put it? Even if you can answer yes to this, even if you are one of the more highly paid workers today, it's still a pretty certain bet that you have a struggle to get by at whatever standard of living you are accustomed to and are expected to maintain. And because you are a worker, you will always have to count the pennies at some stage or other before you can have things which you may particularly need. "Consumers choice" is a pretty empty term under these circumstances—the restriction of choice begins in your pocket, not in the shop window.

But accepting that we all live a pretty narrow sort of life with drabness and insecurity in varying degrees according to size of pay packet, what do you really think of your job? By that I mean just what do you think of the work that you have to do, the duties and responsibilities that it entails? If we are again to judge by the small ads columns, there is no such thing as a dull, monotonous, boring job; "interesting work" is always their claim, but they are usually careful to add "gd. hours", which is a hint of what they really think of the mental attraction of the job. They know that no one will want to stick at it a second longer than necessary and that come knocking-off time, the factory or office will be deserted within minutes. And although many workers do work overtime, it's not generally out of love for their work, but because of the extra cash.

Before the war, when jobs were scarce, you just had to put up with the monotony and make the best of it, but in a time of labour shortage like the present, this is one (but only one) of the factors which make for frequent job changes, particularly among younger workers. One young man still in his twenties was recently reported as having had some *hundreds* of jobs since leaving school. Despite the reformer's prattle about "opportunities for youth", the essential conditions of capitalism—the division of labour and the worker's divorce from ownership of the means of production—will throw up this problem more and more as time goes by.

These thoughts are prompted by a small cutting from *The Guardian* of October 14th. Mr. J. E. Newton,

general secretary of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers, has drawn attention to this very problem. He thinks that workers are getting less and less satisfaction from their jobs and wants Mr. Brown to set up a ministry of industrial psychology "to find out what workers think of their jobs" and "try to redirect personal interest to the workplace or provide the means for obtaining other satisfactions outside work." Without wishing to be rude to Mr. Newton, I think we could well be spared yet another government ministry, especially of psychology (what a horrible thought). And why does he want an investigation to find out what he seems pretty certain of already, anyway?

But his other proposal is interesting. I think it suggests that he does not have much hope of workers ever being able to get fulfilment from their jobs. Indeed, he admits by implication that the search for it outside of working hours is here to stay, and of course he's quite correct. I should say that it will last as long as capitalism; in fact, catering for pastimes and sports has become an industry in itself. Many of us have hobbies of one sort or another and we often work harder at them than we do at our jobs. Others vent their frustrations on old ladies, telephone kiosks and railway carriage upholstery—a particularly ugly trend which is really just the other side of the same coin.

In a Socialist World . . . ?

Yes, you have a right to ask that question. In a Socialist world we would work, but work would take on a new meaning. It would not be synonymous with employment, which is merely the means of getting a living wage, but since it would aim at the full satisfaction of people's needs, it would be also a way of expressing and developing ourselves to the fullest extent. True we would work to live because that is essential in any society, but we would also live to work. I should think that monotony and frustration would be well-nigh impossible under such conditions, not least of all because the heavy specialisation demanded by capitalism would disappear. And we won't need any psychologists to try and teach us how to kid ourselves we're happy when we're anything but.

An Old Story

My father is an old age pensioner and belongs to the local old age pensioners

association. The other day he handed me a copy of *Pensioner's Voice*, the official publication of the National Federation of O.A.P. Associations. "We speak for the older generation," says the caption at top right on the front page, and it's a good job that somebody speaks for them, but let's see how effectively *Pensioner's Voice* manages to do this.

Right off, it denies any political affiliations and claims it has always advised its members to "support any candidate who will support us." Now that should pose quite a question. After all, you have only the election address and speeches of your candidates to go by and the one who does not promise support for the pensioners must be a rarity indeed. You could of course try eliminating from your support list those who had a poor record on the pensions question, but then that would mean eliminating the lot if you were really honest with yourself.

Actually, I was struck by the naivité of this journal. The National Federation was formed twenty-five years ago and represents millions who have a lifetime's experience of working class existence behind them. Yet it still puts the view that Parliament is an impartial body—taken as a whole—and that "all the political parties should be willing and anxious to see that justice is done." Now let us assume you are a pensioner and acted on the Federation's advice during the last election. Perhaps you voted Labour, in which case on Page 3, you will find the Rev. T. E. Nuttall complaining vide the government's national plan, that:—

... We cannot find anything in the white paper about the electoral promise on an entirely new policy to provide an adequate income for each pensioner . . .

Pensioner's Voice has an interesting editorial comment comparing the lot of a £4 a week pensioner with that of a shareholder in I.C.I. It mentions that their £50 millions capital issue in early September was heavily over-subscribed. Not only was this a well written commentary on the glaring inequality that is capitalism, but by this very comparison the writer spotlighted the indignity which is built into working class existence. Yet is there any real questioning of such a world, or even the faintest spark of anger? Not at all. Just a pathetic appeal to put "all hands to the pumps to make his (the pensioner's) life

(continued bottom next page)

Africa

The Study of Africa
by Peter J. M. McEwan and Robert B. Sutcliffe
Methuen 42s.

The vast continent of Africa—5,000 miles from the Mediterranean to the Cape, and 4,600 miles from Senegal to Somalia—is changing rapidly. More rapidly in fact than any other part of the world. It needs to move fast if it is going to catch up with the old-established Capitalist states; it has got a very long way to go.

Africa was the last great area to be conquered and exploited by the European powers. For centuries the settlements were largely coastal, trading posts for trade with the interior, victualling ports for ships bound for the Orient, and, of course, depots for that most profitable of commodities, slaves. Not until well into the 19th century

The passing show, from page 192

a bit easier."

In looking at the pensioner's movement in Britain over the last few years I have noted this attitude, which runs like a thread through its literature. Always it is an appeal, rather than a demand, for better income and social services. Granted that old workers do not have the same vigour to push their interests as youngsters have, but the really big factor behind their failure is their lack of bargaining power because they are now out of the production line. This is the biggest slap in the face that capitalism gives them.

So to them, the need for Socialism should be of particular interest, and it is especially sad that many of them will die without ever having considered it.

Gaspers

"... We are under the constant survey of foreign friends . . . Any back sliding on our part, which lays us open to accusations that we are . . . putting social needs before financial responsibility, would very quickly cause the leaves on the plant of confidence to shrivel." (Lord Cromer, 21/10/65)

"It is a remarkable thing how in the last quarter of a century the doctrine of Socialism as a way of life . . . is everywhere, even in Russia, thoroughly discredited." (Lord Shawcross, ex-Minister in the 1945 Labour Government, 4/11/65)

"One MP suggested the skinning alive of hanged men and the use of their skulls as beer pots." (*The Guardian*, 11/11/65, reporting the debate in the Malawi Parliament on the Penal Code Amendment Bill)

E.T.C.

did the Europeans really move in, so that the work of industrialising or exterminating tribal peoples has not progressed as far as in the Americas or Australasia.

Many areas of Africa have had only about sixty years of colonialism, and millions of people still live a tribal existence away from the industrial areas and modern communications. Non-European Capitalists are still rather small in number, but they are growing, and display all the vulgar ostentation associated with the newly rich. It is on them that the job of breaking tribal barriers, and producing an industrial proletariat, will fall.

With so much happening in so vast an area, Africa is somewhat baffling, and poses a mass of questions. Why was the continent late in being exploited? Why have so many African States gone totalitarian? *The Study of Africa* is a useful textbook on this subject. It describes the physical environment, the historical development, and the contemporary scene. Why, for example, has the southern part of the continent developed in a different way to the rest?

"The nationalism of East and Central Africa was handicapped in a way that the West was not: namely, by the presence of large numbers of white settlers. The climate and land of the area were more conducive to European farming and consequent settlement."

It was these settlers, basically farmers rather than traders, or exploiters of mineral wealth, that built up a large white population, large enough to enable them to keep their grip on the State machine. This has been brought to the forefront again in the last few weeks by Rhodesia.

The book is well served with maps and appendices.

L. DALE

The universe

The Fabric of the Heavens
by Toulmin and Goodchild, Pelican Books 6s.

This is the first of four books in a connected series entitled *The Ancestry of Science*. It is a book of interest to socialists for the authors view of history is akin to the Materialist Conception of History, and they have applied it to the development of astronomy and dynamics. "... a man can do in his own time only a job which is there to be done; but there may be many different ways in which he can do it." Although they raise this point with reference to Isaac Newton, their whole work is evidence of this development within history from the Babylonians through to modern times.

They contrast this view of history with the deterministic "the acts of historical

drama will follow one another of the same general sequence regardless of what actor takes any particular part" and the concept of the great men who "leap far ahead of their times, forcing thought along genuinely new and creative paths."

The Babylonians commenced the study of astronomy not merely for religious forecasting—the celestial bodies were regarded as gods, but because within their empire there were many different calendar systems based upon the sun or the moon and "commercial and official business alike called for a more predictable and uniform calendar." They collected observations over many centuries in order to improve their celestial forecasting, which they did with great accuracy, but apparently without any attempt to explain the sequence of the events they observed.

The Greeks were later to speculate on the causes of what the Babylonians had observed. Greece before 300 B.C. was unlike Babylonia in that it was not an area of order and stability, and it was "a meeting point for different cultures." This situation led to a minority, often unpopular, making critical speculation concerning nature, politics, religion, etc., a speculation which was to lead to theories, many of which contained ideas to be developed later in Western Europe.

The unification of Greece commenced the decline in the spread of science. The paths of mathematics and astronomy began to diverge, the study of physics declined—"By A.D. 200, astrology had recovered all the ground that it had ever lost, and had effectively displaced rational astrophysics." The reasons were political, social, economic and religious. This decline had such an effect that the last questions of Ptolemy were the first to be asked by Copernicus some thirteen centuries later, that is after fifteen centuries of Christendom. The authors show that members of the church often critically analysed concepts of the heavens, despite the fact that dogma had to be accepted.

The authors give considerable evidence that the ideas of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton and many others were milestones in the developing understanding of the universe, but assert that their ideas were expected developments from previous knowledge, and arose out of the problems confronting students of astronomy and physics in their times.

Inability to find an adequate explanation of the universe long led men to think "that divine revelation alone could give certainty." But in the eighteenth century men thought that Newton had revealed "true laws for good. His theories seemed certain, correct, final. Later logical doubts and perplexities began to arise."

When men solve problems it will often appear that their solutions are final. A problem has been removed, but neither nature nor society remain constant; new problems arise, the study of which extends

BOOKS

BOOKS

man's knowledge.

According to the authors "the progress of science always involves a delicate balance between critical observation and speculative theorising — between careful piecemeal investigation of particular problems and imaginative general interpretation of the results obtained."

In capitalist society, in the fields of the natural sciences, it is possible to observe critically, to make speculative imaginative interpretations, but in the social sciences capitalist society, assuming itself to be correct and final, restricts scientific enquiry. Progress in social enquiry is prevented because the class nature of society and its consequences are ignored.

Freedom of enquiry in the natural sciences will continue under capitalist society, and astrophysics will not be an exception, for developments can usually be put to commercial advantage. Enquiry into the social and economic field will be encouraged only if it accepts capitalist society and aids commercial development, for example, market analysis or industrial psychology. Only Socialists can study problems of capitalist society uninhibited with ideas of its permanence. We alone are able to rebut the theories of capitalist social sciences—often from their own evidence. They stand condemned when comparison is made with the advances in the natural sciences in the past two hundred years, from canal to space travel, and yet in the social field the problems of poverty, insecurity, housing, etc., remain.

These problems arise out of the nature of capitalism and cannot be removed until society is changed. When that is done, and Socialism is established, the social sciences will be as free and unrestricted as are the natural sciences in their respective fields of study.

K.K.

Immigration

Immigration and Race in British Politics
by Paul Foot, *Penguin Special*.

Paul Foot, a journalist for the *Sunday Telegraph* and also the editor of the semi-trotskyist *Labour Worker*, has written a very useful account of immigration and race in British politics. In this book can be found facts on Griffiths' campaign in Smethwick, on reactions to the past Irish and Jewish immigration control, on the campaign and final success of those pressing for immigration control in the conservative and Labour Parties, on anti-immigrant organisations like the British National Party, the New Liberals of Islington and the various Immigration Control Associations in the Birmingham area. The reaction of the so-called Communist Party to the influx of Polish refugees after the war is recalled. Incidentally, a similar attitude was adopted towards the later Hungarian refugees with the *Daily Worker* using the old technique of over-reporting crimes committed by Hungarians. One striking omission is any reference to the black racist organisations which try to channel the frustrations of coloured people caused by capitalism against "the White man."

As Paul Foot has elsewhere declared himself in favour of "international socialism" we are perhaps justified in criticising his solutions severely from this point of view.

Socialists hold that the many social problems which people face today arise from the fact that they own nothing but their ability to work which they must sell for wages in order to live. Capitalism, based as it is on wage-labour and production for profit, is the root cause of the problems which arise over housing, education, work and health. Colour and other kinds of prejudice result mainly from the competition and general

insecurity of wage and salary workers under Capitalism which make conspicuous minorities obvious scapegoats for social frustrations and ills.

In this book Paul Foot tends to blame these social problems not on the economic system but on what the government does or does not do. He speaks of the slander of those who blame

"the immigrant himself for the social problems resulting from Government neglect."

The answer to government neglect, says Mr. Foot, is obviously government action. So, after pointing out that colour prejudice arises from the frustrations of modern life, he says:

"The main task of government is to remove the root cause of this 'displaced aggression': to end the shortages which so cramp the lives of working people."

It is difficult to work out if Paul Foot really believes this as in the no doubt less inhibiting pages of the magazine *International Socialism* (No. 22) he writes that such shortages are

"entirely due to an economic system which produces wealth for the benefit and superiority of a class."

In other words they are not due to "Government neglect" and if the economic system is the cause then the only solution can be to remove it and not to appeal to the government. Paul Foot is deluding himself if he really believes that action by the capitalist State, whether managed by Labour or Conservative, can solve the problem of colour prejudice. Even if we accept that government action could have some marginal effect this would only be tinkering with the problem.

A.L.B.

LETTERS

Socialism

In the Declaration of Principles it is stated "... the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government ..." and "The SPGB, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties ..." You also rightly criticise the Labour Government for administering capitalism rather than attempting Socialism.

But how would the SPGB, given a majority in Parliament and support in the country comparable with the Labour Government, attempt to alter the means of production from Capitalist to Socialist in the face of opposition from the vested capitalist interests?

And if this country, or any other, was changed into a Socialist community, on what basis would it attempt to trade and keep relations with the non-Socialist world?

P. R. MORRIS, *London, S.E.24.*

REPLY

A Labour Government administers capitalism for the simple reason that it cannot do anything else. The Labour Party is an organisation which stands for the reform, and not the abolition, of capitalism; it asks for votes to run capitalism and when it is in power it cannot exceed this mandate, even supposing that it had the knowledge and the desire to do so.

The Labour Party does not care about the consciousness—or the lack of it—which is behind the votes which sends it to power. Just like any other capitalist political party, it will accept any support as long as it can achieve its main object of becoming the government.

That is why the Labour Party cannot "attempt" to establish Socialism; indeed, no political party can do this. Socialism cannot be imposed by a minority of political leaders; it will come only as the result of a conscious action by the world working class. This action will be backed by the knowledge of what Socialism is and how it must be established. When the working class have this knowledge, they will elect Socialist delegates with a mandate to take all necessary steps to end the capitalist social system and to replace it with Socialism. Because of the knowledge of the people who have elected them, the delegates will have no power to do other than they have been instructed. This will be a massive, universal movement—it will not and cannot be confined to any one country or group of countries.

Socialism will mean the end of the private ownership of the means of wealth production. It will, therefore, also mean the end of trading, both national and international. There will be no separate nations to compete against and to bargain with, each

other. Society's wealth will move freely over the world, from the places where it is produced to the places where it is needed. The entire operation will be governed by human needs, in every sense of the term.

The entire structure of capitalism—including its "vested interests"—exists only because the working class wills it so. It is the working class who man the forces of coercion and who regularly vote the representatives of capitalism into the seats of power. It is the working class who organise and administer the capitalist social system, from one end to the other. When they realise that they can run society in their own interests, when they decide to take away the power and privilege of the ruling class and to establish Socialism, there will be nothing which could stop them.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

From Trinidad

Things in Trinidad are warming up. Elections are next year and so far we have four political parties in the fray. The P.N.M. (Peoples National Movement) under the leadership of Dr. Eric Williams, is still the hot favourite to continue, while the D.L.P. (Democratic Labour Party) is losing ground. Although still officially the Opposition, it is led by London-based Dr. Capildeo. A comparatively new party, the Liberals, led by Mr. Farquhar, is gaining what the D.L.P. is losing, and the last-formed party, the

Farmers and Workers Party, is led by Mr. C. L. R. James.

Earlier this year the Government passed a Bill aimed at curbing strikes. The Bill is known as the Industrial Stabilisation Act (I.S.A.). The Prime Minister announced there were too many strikes in the country, which interfered with the economy and frightened away foreign or would-be investors, so therefore the Bill is justified. This Act has curtailed the functions of the Trade Unions, as all disputes must go to the Industrial Court for its ruling. There is no appeal against judgment and since all those taking part in strike action in any way can be jailed for long periods, the Trade Unions have got their tails between their legs. As a result the various Unions are divided on the issue, some for the Act, others against it. The trick of the capitalists to divide the working class is self-evident. On the scene at this time is Mr. C. L. R. James, who contends that the I.S.A. is a violation not only of the Constitution, but of the rights of the workers, who are reduced to nothing but slaves. He is joined by Mr. G. Weekes, President-General of the powerful oil workers' Union, and slowly other Union leaders are following. The Unions have now obtained the services of Mr. Platt-Mills, Q.C., to challenge the validity of the I.S.A. in the light of the Constitution.

To a Socialist one thing is clear. Whatever the outcome—the workers will have nothing to gain.

CORBIE, *Trinidad.*

FOR THE RECORD

The record of the twists and turns of the so-called communist parties throughout the world are well-known to those who bother to study working-class political history. In view of the prominence currently given to the colour problem both here and in America it will be useful to recall one incident in the history of the American party. It is taken from a review in the *Weekly People* (September 13th, 1958) of New York of *The American Communist Party: A Critical History* (1919-1957) by Irving Howe and Lewis Coser.

In the 1930's the American party went all out to get Negro support using as a bait the fantastic demand for "self-determination in the Black Belt."

"World War II changed also this. In September of 1941, Benjamin Davis, soon to become a prominent Negro Communist, wrote that 'the CP is disturbed by the increasing struggle of Negroes for jobs in defence plants.' (Authors' italics). The CP dissolved its Southern branches (those that did not exist solely on paper) during the war in order to mollify the Southern wing of the Democratic Party by show-

ing its zeal to help prosecute the war with no 'dissension' in the South.

"Another bit of CP history from the mass of material presented by Coser and Howe deserves to be included here. The authors describe it as 'one of those peculiarly symptomatic incidents that reveal more than any number of party documents.' In 1945, four Negro WAC's at Fort Devens discovered a group of wounded Negro soldiers who had been left unattended. When they complained to the camp authorities, the Army's answer was a court-martial!

"The protests from all sides were so vigorous that the Army reversed its decision. This reversal, which brought some satisfaction to those with normal feelings of good will and a sense of fair play, brought only pain to Ben Davis. In the *Daily Worker* of April 8th, 1945, the official organ of the CP, he reprimanded the WAC's for disturbing the Communist hoped-for serenity of the domestic scene.

"The US general staff has on many occasions ... proved that they deserve their full confidence of the Negro people ... We cannot temporarily stop the war until all questions of discrimination are ironed out."

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Thursdays 8 pm

At the following meeting a representative of the Salvation Army will provide the main speaker. A member of the SPGB will reply from the platform followed by questions and discussion.

December 2nd
SALVATION ARMY

December 9th and 16th
FILM **THE GERMAN STORY**
Commentary by H. Weaver

LEWISHAM

Davenport Hall (Co-op), 1 Davenport
Road, Rushley Green, SE6
Mondays 8 pm

December 6th
THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

December 13th
THE TORY OPPOSITION

PADDINGTON & MARYLEBONE

The Royal Oak, York Street, W1
(near Marylebone Road)
Wednesdays 9 pm

December 1st
**THE LITERATURE OF THE
MARXIAN SCHOOL**
Speaker: S. Goldstein

December 8th
**A review of the
December Socialist Standard**

December 15th
SOCIALIST IDENTITY
Speaker: F. James

December 22nd
BRANCH SOCIAL

KIDDERMINSTER

Station Inn, Farfield
Comberton Road
Wednesdays 7.30 pm

December 8th
Discussion:
How to establish Socialism?

January 12th
SOCIALISM & EDUCATION
Speaker: K. Knight

GLASGOW MEETINGS

Woodside Public Halls
Sundays 7.30 pm
"BOOKS OF OUR TIMES"

December 5th
THE WASTE MAKERS
Speaker: A. Webster

December 12th
NEWS FROM NOWHERE
Speaker: V. Vanni

December 19th
SCOURGE OF THE SWASTIKA
Speaker: R. Russell

December 26th
HONEST TO GOD
Speaker: A. Shaw

GLASGOW STUDY CLASSES

Thursdays 8 pm, Branch Rooms
163a Berkeley Street

GROUP 2—
"BARRIERS TO SOCIALISM"

December 2nd
ANARCHISM

December 9th
INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

December 16th
ANTI-PARLIAMENTARIANS

January 6th, 1966
TROTSKYISM

January 13th
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THE WASTE MAKERS
Speaker: C. May

December 12th
SPIRITUALISM
Speaker: J. Law

December 19th
**HOW THE SCOTTISH
HIGHLANDS WERE WON
FOR CAPITALISM**
Speaker: A. W. Edgar

January 2nd, 1966
IRISH REBELS and their causes
Speaker: A. Fahy

January 9th
**The current situation
in EDUCATION**
Speaker: K. Knight

HACKNEY

Hackney Trades Hall, Valette St., E9
(facing Hackney Empire)
Wednesdays, 8.30 pm

December 8th
MEN & MACHINES
Speaker: D. Zucconi

December 15th
THE GERMAN STORY
Speaker: H. Weaver

LONDON OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Sundays
Hyde Park, 3 and 6 pm
East Street, Walworth
December 5th and 26th (noon)
December 12th (11 am)
December 19th (1 pm)

Mondays
Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1-2 pm

Wednesdays
Charing Cross Tube Station
(Villiers Street) 8 pm

Thursdays
Tower Hill, 12.30-2 pm
Earls Court, 8 pm
Bromley Library, 8.30 pm

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Co-op Hall, 127 Seven Sisters Rd., N1
Thursday, 13th January, 1966, at 8 pm
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